Mother and Child

an opera in one act

Libretto by Ron Whyte Music by Lee McClure

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FILM OF THE OPERA

A fully produced film of the premiere performance of Mother And Child at the Cathedral St. John the Divine (NYC) is viewable on Youtube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gtiSiK hZOA

With subtitles it includes scenario, credits, and background notes.

Together with VOICE, the 2nd opera by Whyte & McClure, the two operas are collectively known as "Life Songs".

The film of VOICE can also be seen on Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZ6cSRehZ34&t=95s

MOTHER AND CHILD

SYNOPSIS

A poor Italian mother, Angelina, returns home to her newborn baby. The babysitter, Julia, refuses to look at the baby because the neighbors say the child has the "evil eye". Unable to dissuade Julia of her superstition, Angelina throws her out.

After moving a large plaster statue of the Virgin Mary to the kitchen table, Angelina kneels and seeks advice from the Virgin. She sings about her life leading up to the birth of her child. Acting as a "Greek chorus", Mother 2 and Mother 3 sing about the health and beauty of the baby girl, but conclude by revealing that the baby has no legs or fingers.

Angelina descends into her darkest moment, wondering if her baby would be better off dead. She desperately waits for a sign from the Virgin. Receiving no sign, Angelina becomes enraged. Angrily she breaks off limbs of the statue and smashes rosary beads.

Silently Angelina sits depressed with her head bowed while Mothers 2 & 3 take on the voices of the neighbors who say "the baby has the evil eye", and of her doctor who mentioned slyly "oftentimes these babies die." Finally resisting these voices, Angelina repeatedly sings "no, no, No!"

All music stops when the baby quietly coughs and cries. Angelina runs to the baby carriage and sings her a lullaby. Now she wants her baby girl to live, but is forlorn thinking about the child's life to come.

Going to the kitchen table, Angelina despondently picks up and embraces the statue of Mary. Inadvertently, she transfers a tear to the Virgin's face. She conceives of the miracle. She reassembles the broken parts of the statue in the Virgin's niche, carefully cleans up the plaster dust and broken beads, and dots the eyes of the Virgin with holy water.

Angelina throws open the front door and shouts out the window: "there's been a miracle!" A group of old Italian women crowd into the room. Pointing to the broken statue, Angelina says that the Virgin has made herself like her baby; that the Virgin cries for her baby; that this is a sign that her baby is blessed.

The old women join Angelina in singing Hail Mary, Full of Grace. The opera ends with: "let this baby live!"

CHARACTERS

JULIA A young Italian girl, about 16 years old

(non-singing, non-speaking role)

ANGELINA An Italian woman

A Latino woman, Mother 2

A "foreign" woman, Mother 3, in shadows 3:

MANY OLD (Non-singing, some whispering)

WOMEN

A BABY GIRL

(In crib)

A STATUE OF THE MADONNA

One room apartment in a small Italian PLACE:

immigrant community, in Montana

TIME: The Present Age

SCORING

ANGELINA: Soprano

MOTHER 2: Mezzo-soprano

MOTHER 3: Contralto

FOUR-HAND-PIANO

Two Cellos Marked in Red

NOTES ON PERFORMANCE

ANCELINA is one woman, but also several women.

The play is a MONOLOGUE as TRIO.

The director should begin with the "realism" of Angelina, and add the other women, with Angelina's gestures. This should not get too "clever." The idea is SIMPLE, and the statement is clear.

* * * * * *

The set elements given in the script should be vividly, minimally present, except crib, table, and large statue of the Madonna and the burning candles which illuminate, finally, the three singing women in their three separate areas.

* * * * * *

ANGELINA is also referred to as ANG or A in the score. THE LATINO WOMAN, MOTHER 2, is referred to as M2 or 2; THE FOREIGN WOMAN, MOTHER 3, is always in shadows, and is referred to as M3 or 3.

MOTHER AND CHILD

An opera in one act

for

three female singers and four-hand-piano, two cellos Libretto by Ron Whyte - Music by Lee McClure

SECTIONAL OUTLINE

CHORUS is used to mean all three singers in a homophonic texture; where as TRIO implies three part counterpoint. DUET can mean all three singers but in a two part texture.

The opera is made up of three sections in one continuous movement.

First Section: THE SITUATION

SCORE PG.NO:	MUSIC	TITLE OR ACTION
1	Recitatives; alternating Rock vamp, sostenuto, & quiet ballad vamp.	Angelina arrives. Julia won't look at the baby. Julia leaves.
12	Interlude: sostenuto sequence of Rock vamp.	Angelina thinking; she takes the statue of the Madonna to the table.
13	Sostenuto ostinato	Angelina sings to the Madonna.
18	Trio; sostenuto	"I love my husband"
20	Aria; 3/4 vs. 2/4	"We wanted a baby"
23	Chorus; waltz	"Beautiful soul to raise"
24	Duet; waltz	"It's a girl"
29	Trio; dark largo	"But you see; no legs"
32	Aria	"She smiles"
	Second Sec	tion
	DEVELOPME	ENT
34	Trio; space ostinato	"They say"
38	Trio; slow march; 3 layers: prayer, despair, & anger	"It will get worse"
44	Medium march; alternating moods	"When she grows up"
48	Recitative; bitonal 6/8	"The doctor says"
52	Trio; medium march; three layers	"There is no way"
54	Trio; march; three layers	"To even wish the thing"
56	Duet; march	"If you say"
58	3 part canon	"I will give her to you now"
60	3 part Blue Canon; a cappella	"You don't answer"

SCORE PG.NO:	MUSIC	TITLE OR ACTION
	Atonal Sections:	
63	Duet	"How will you raise the sick"
		Angelina breaks off limbs of the Madonna
68	1st climax	"Where is the sign"
71	2nd climax	"And still you smile"
72	Bitonal recitative	Angelina becomes cruel and
76	3rd climax	"They will not know"
76	Diminished melody with clusters and whispering	"Now you are human"
79	Quotes of first aria with atonal accompaniment	"Many years ago"
83	Chorus	"There is no god"
86	4th climax	0.2
87	Mother 2 sings from back- stage; Mother 3 from whis- pering to shouting	"No man will have her"
95	5th climax	"They die; no! no!"
	End Atonal Sections	,,
	Third Sec	ction
	RESOLUTI	ION
96	Trio; lullaby; a cappella	"My poor baby"
99	Aria; waltz	"Every baby is beautiful"
102	Ben Hur Waltz	"The greatest blessing of all"
103	Recitative; minor modal ostinato	"Why am I such a fool?"
106	Grand accelerando	Angelina developes the idea of a miracle
111	Gospel "train ride"	"Everybody Help! Call a priest!
116	Ben Hur miracle	Angelina explains to the old women
120	Quiet ballad vamp	"See how she cries"
121	Chorus; Bolero vamp; grand crscendo	"This is a sign that"
127	Chorus; Latin 2/4	"I will carry you"
129	Recitative	"I promise to raise my baby"
	CODA	
132	Rock vamp	"She loves my baby"
135	Chorus; Ending Theme; slow waltz over Rock vamp	"Hail Mary full of Grace"
		The state of the s

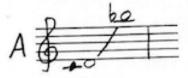
SCORE		
PG.NO:	MUSIC	TITLE OR ACTION
138	Ending Theme; Latin 6/8	"Blessed is the fruit"
140	Grand Accelerando	Chorus rotates breathing
143	Chorus; Rock vamp	"Mother Mary pray for us"
	Chorus, variation of Ending Theme:	"Hail Mary full of Grace"
146	1st time	
149	2nd time	
151A	3rd time	
152	Chorus; truncated Ending Theme; sung 3 times	
154	Trio: 2-bar quasi-Latin coro in 3 part counter-point; piano: 1-bar vamp	"Let this baby live!"
155	Repeats with over-all cresce	ndo until:

CURTAIN

NOTES ON THE SCORE

Vocal Ranges:

ANGELINA, Ang, or A: soprano:



MOTHER 2, M2, or 2: mezzo-soprano:



MOTHER 3, M3, or 3: contralto:



The black notes in the above are doubled by one or two of the other singers.

Angelina sings most of the time. M2 and M3 sing about half of the time.

There are two a cappella sections: Pg.60-63: 3 part canon Pg.96-98: Lullaby

At the top of each score page there is a tempo reminder in parentheses, except during an accelerando or ritard.

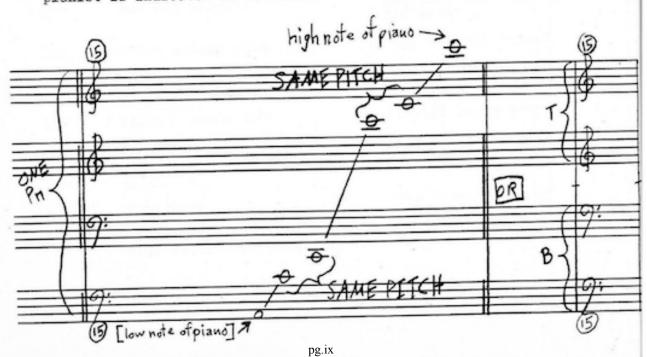
All metric modulations are expressed with old value first and conversion to the new value second. [040] [NEW] example:

The piano part calls for 4-hand-piano in the following sections: Pg.65-79; 89-95; 98-155 (end).

The treble pianist is indicated by: T Pn, or T bass " " by: B Pn, or B

is used; or 2 octaves lower when the used. For a cancel 15VA indications, or they are reminders to play at pitch, i.e., loco.

Occasionally the entire piano range whether for one or both pianist is indicated as follows:



Notes to be held down over a pedal change or when the pedal is not to be used, are indicated in one of two ways:

HH (hand held) is put over a tie: ; or all notes under a double slur are to be held down for the duration of the last note under the double slur:

When PH (pedal held) is indicated over a tie, it means the pianist does not have to hold down the notes because the pedal in in use.

For production a color-coded score with colored vertical lines on each barline will be provided for the pianists: Green for T Pn and Red for B Pn; also it will not contain the pages that only have stage-directions; and none of the measures or barlines will be bound-out.

In the atomal sections indeterminate but approximate location of pitch is indicated with $\mathbf{x}'\mathbf{s}$:

See notes on score pages 64 & 67.

Pagination of the score

1 - 10

10A, 10B, 11, 11A

12 - 102

102A

103 - 106

106A, 106B, 107, 107A

108 - 119

119A

120 -128

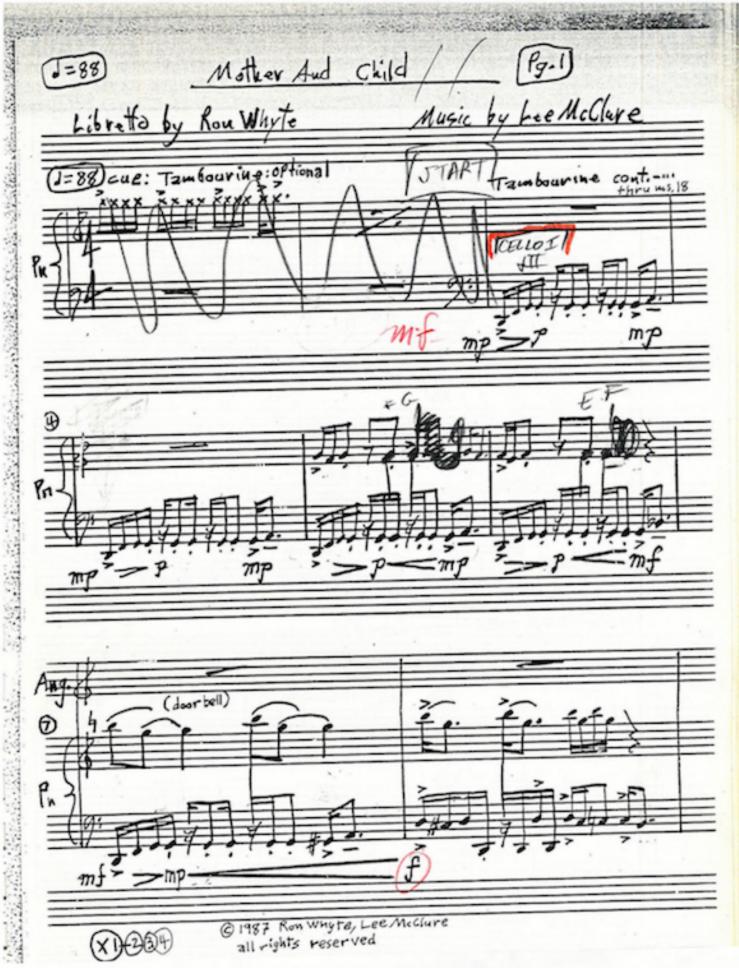
128A, 128B, 129, 129A

130 - 151

151A, 151B, 151C

152 - 155

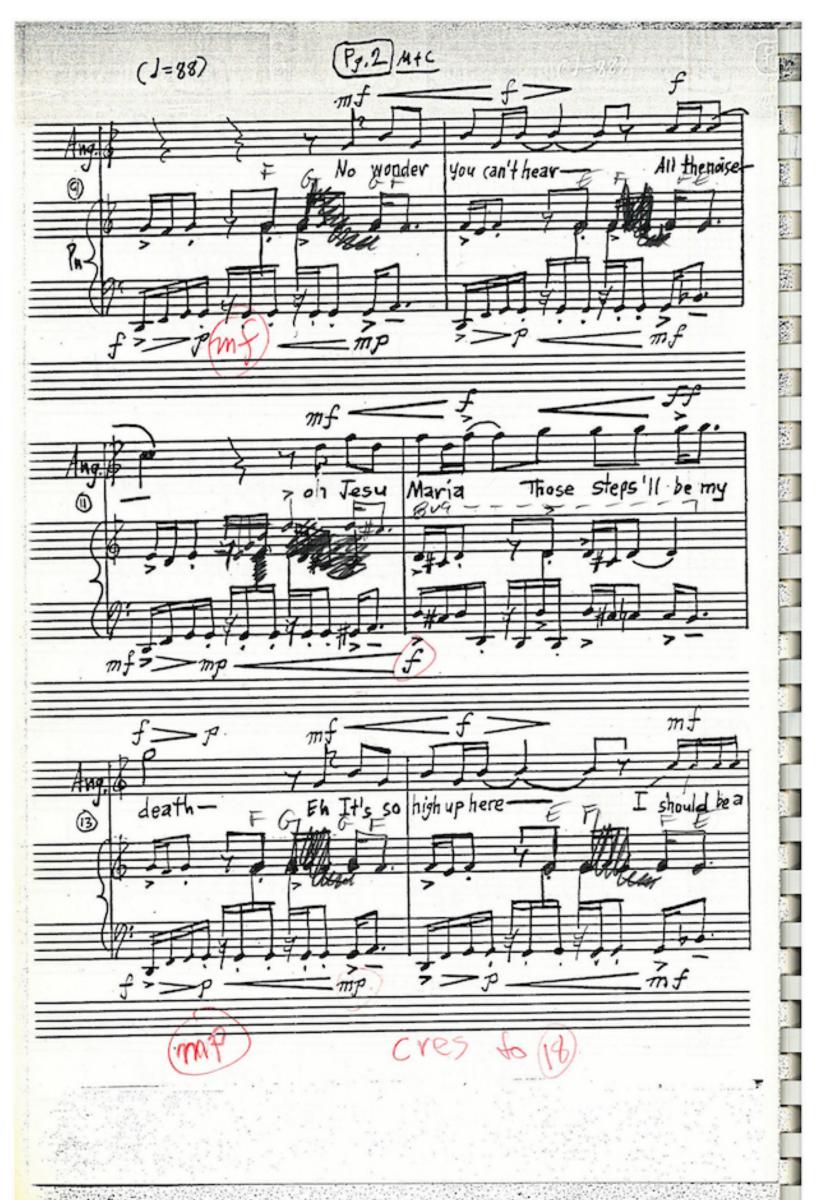
156 = score correction notes



Two cellos marked in piano part - mostly in RED

Ang or A = Angelina (soprano) M2 or 3 = Mother2 (mezzo) M3 or 3 = Mother3 (alto)

Four-hand-piano T = treble pianist B = bass pianist





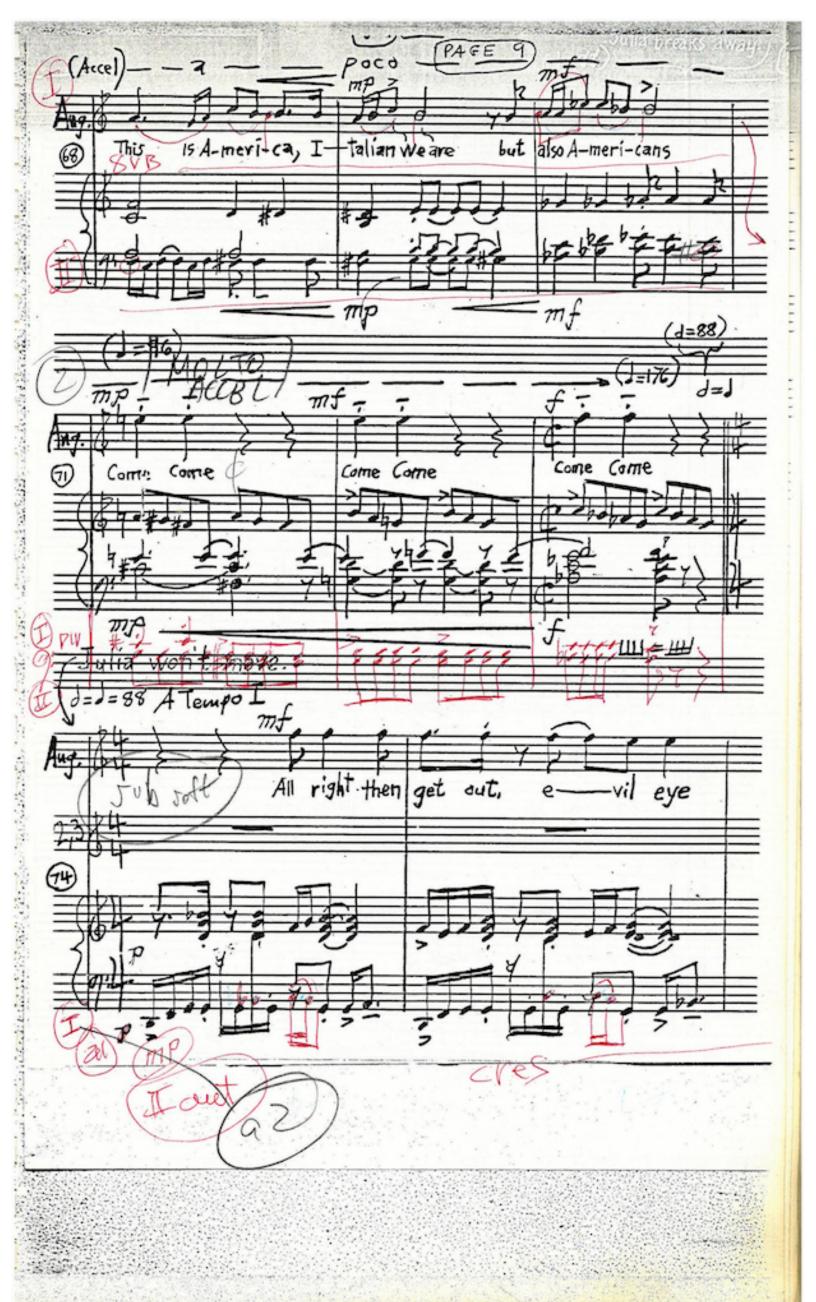


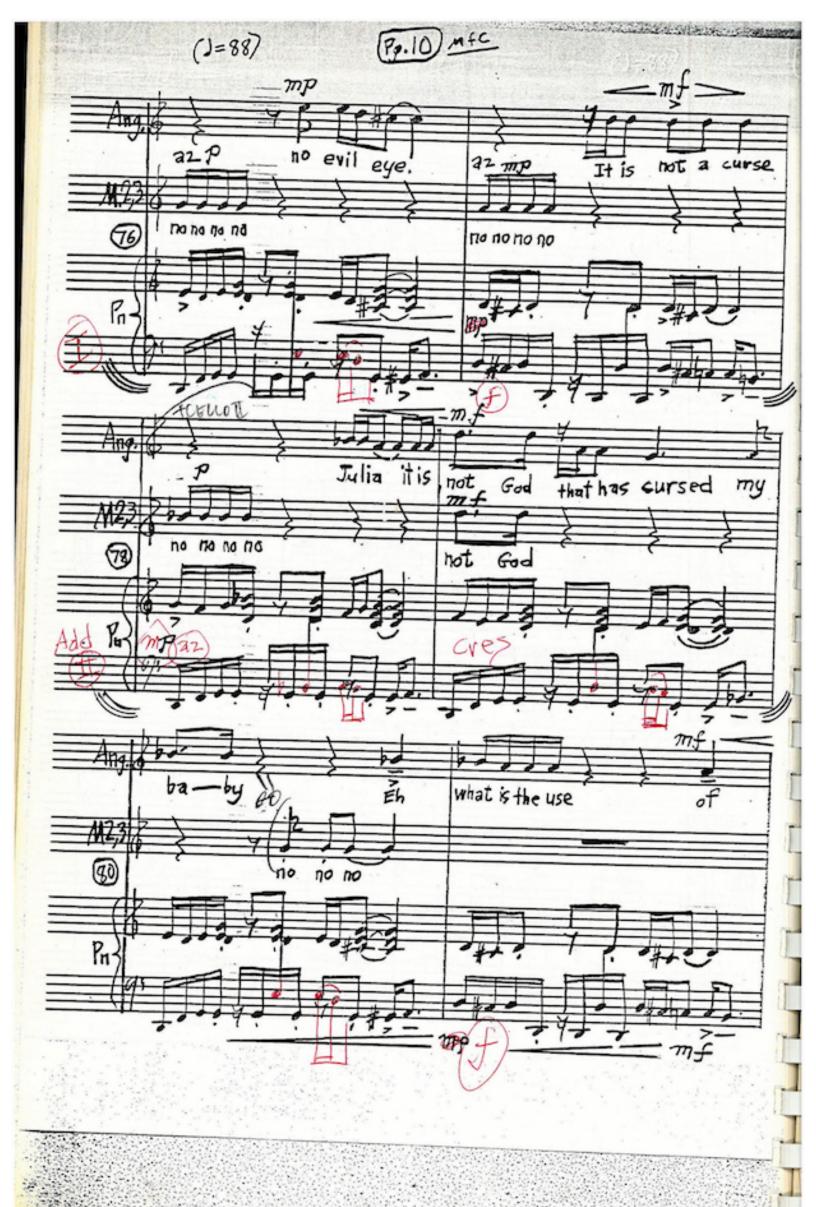


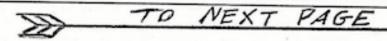


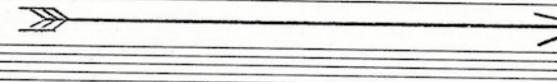












(B.10B)

(ms. = measure)

NOTE 1: ms.84, 85

Angelina grabs the nearest object, which happens to be the tiny transistor radio, and threatens to throw it at Julia. Julia wants to run away, but she also wants her radio.

NOTE 2: ms.87, repeating

Julia indicates the radio. Angelina looks at it, realizes that it is Julia's. She holds it out. Julia cautiously reaches for it. Grabs it, and runs out the door. She slams it behind her.



NOTE 3: ms.88-108

Pause. Angelina makes a face, then makes an obscene gesture at the door. She goes to the crib, leans into it, and kisses the baby.

She stands up. Pause. She thinks, making a frowning face. She shrugs. She makes the same obscene gesture at the door. She goes to her grocery bags, and begins to unpack one, but she is disturbed. An idea is forming, deep in her mind. She glances at the crib. She thinks. She goes to the window and draws the shade. She is up to something, that is obvious.

She carefully clears off the table, then wipes her hand across it, making certain it is clean. It isn't. She wipes it with a dish towel. There. Now it is clean.

She goes to the statue of the Virgin. She crosses herself, after dipping her hand into a little bowl of holy water. She carefully takes the candles to the table. Then she brings the Virgin to the table, and sets her down.

Angelina crosses herself again. She is about to speak: She stops herself, gets a large kitchen match, strikes it on the box, and lights a candle. Now she can speak openly to the Virgin.







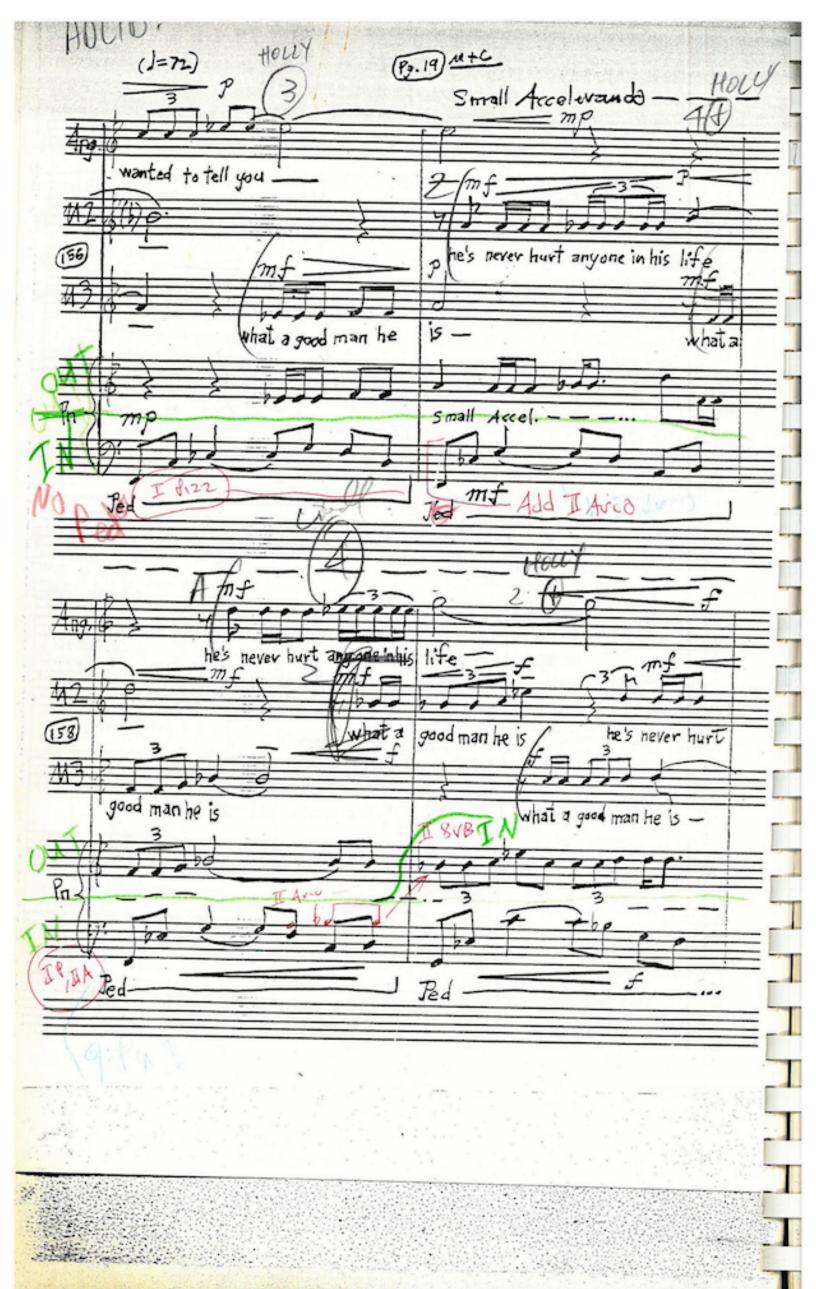
VCI = And 628 notes

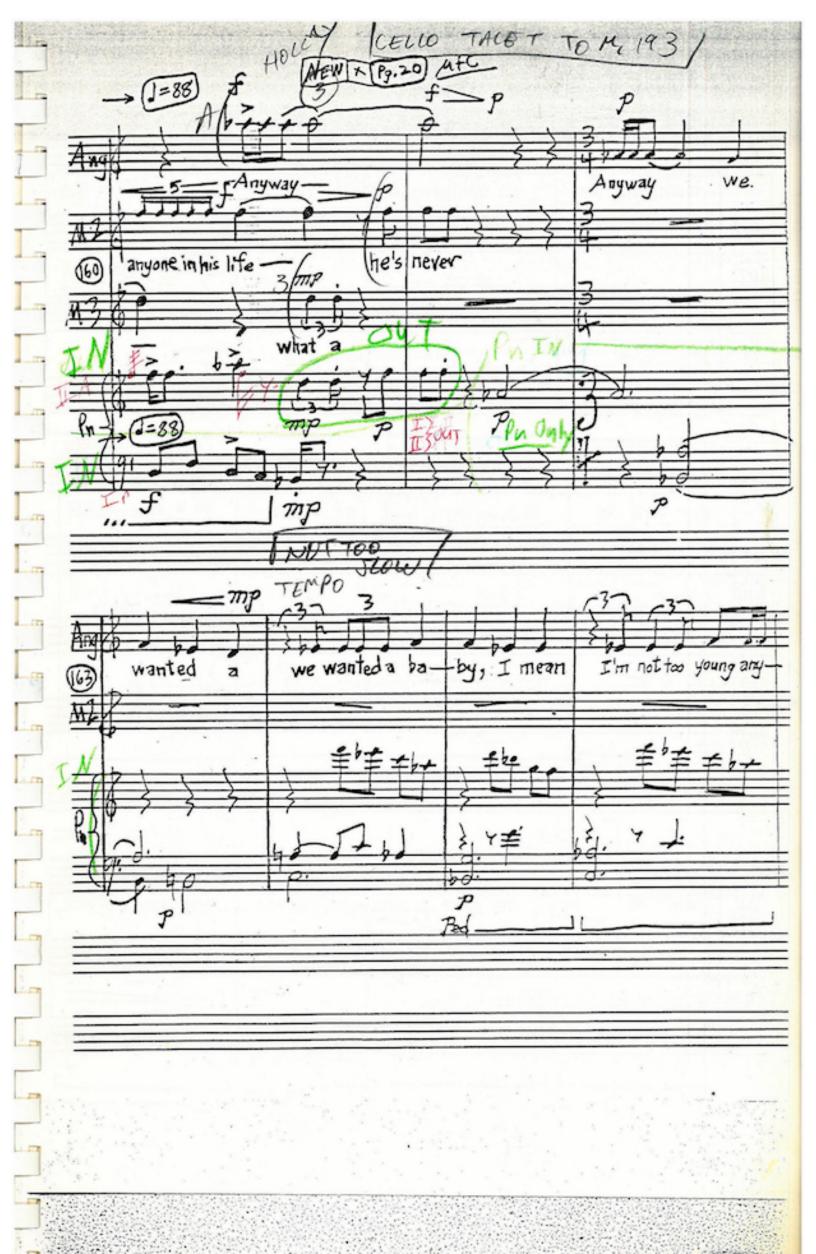


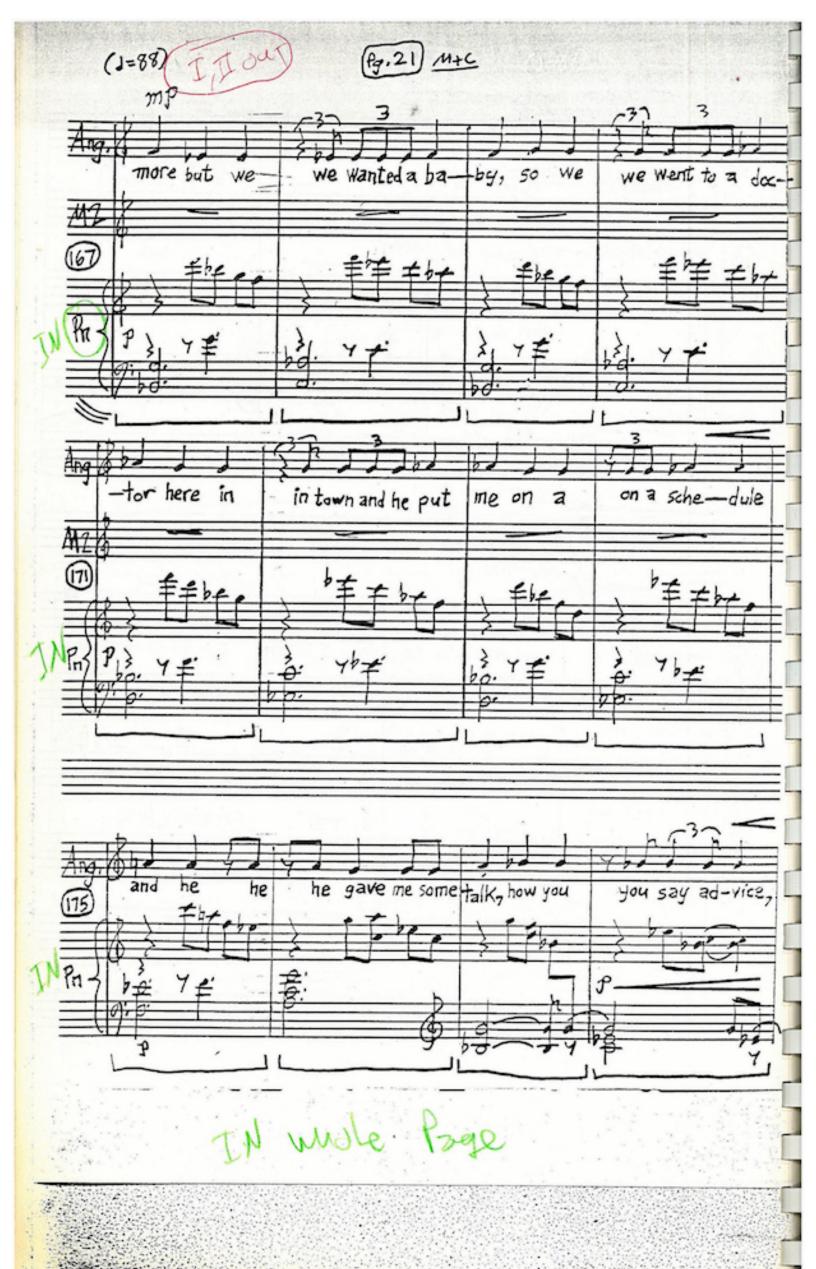








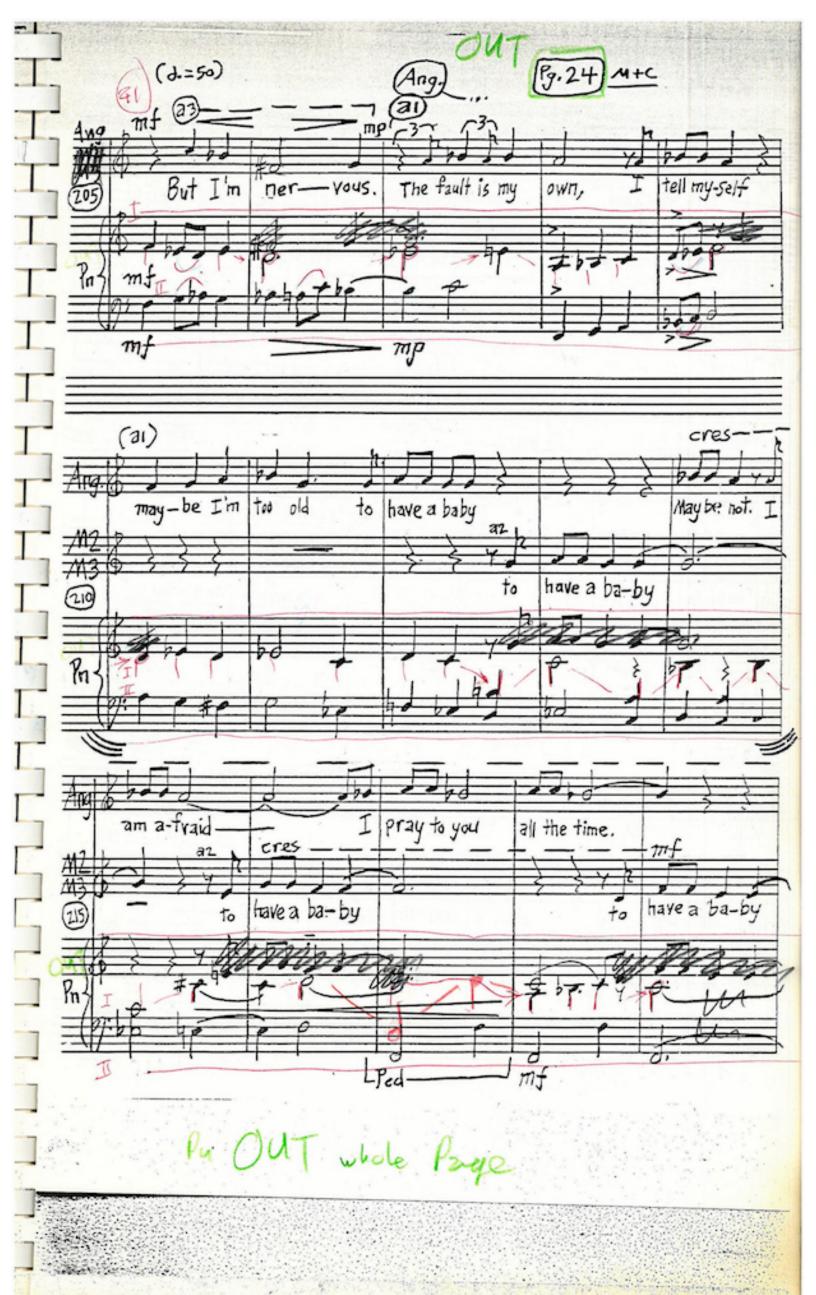




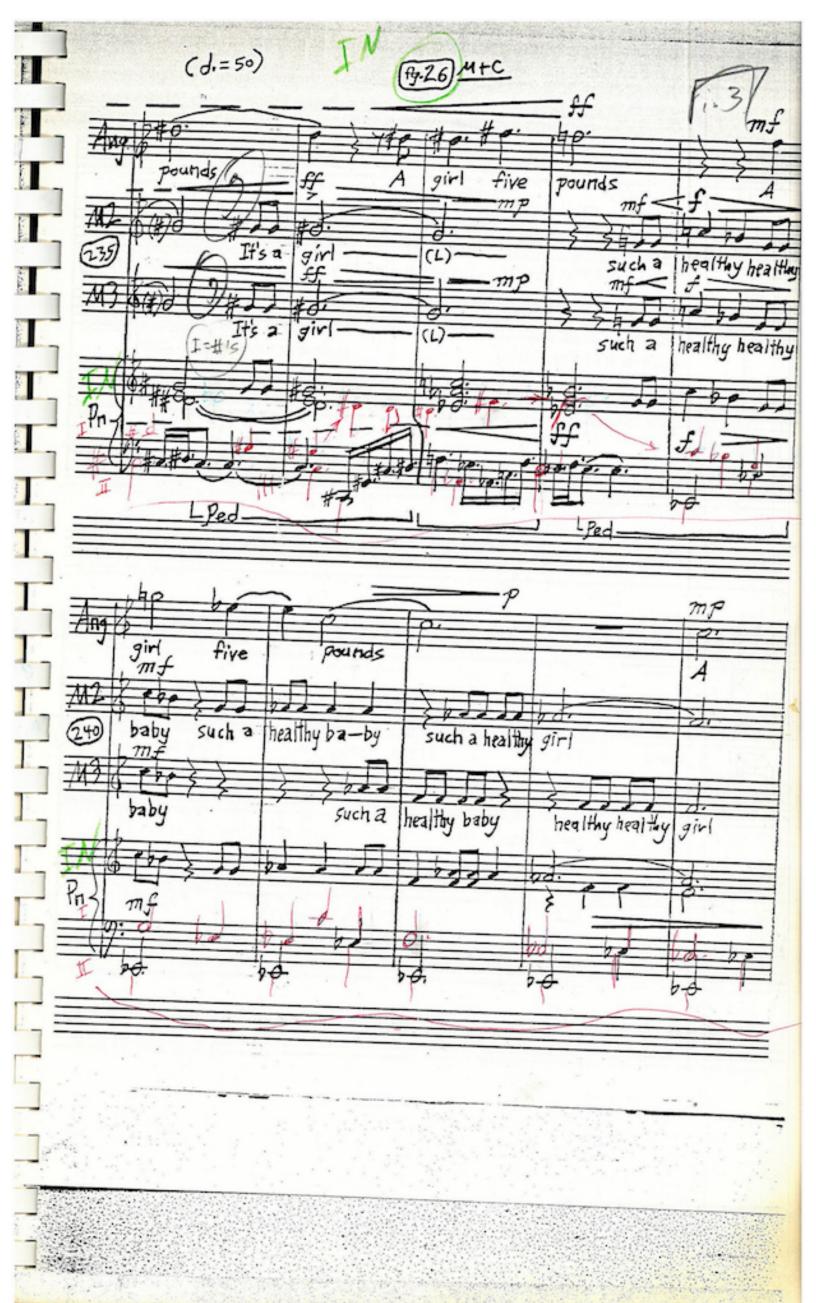


Pu IN whole Page

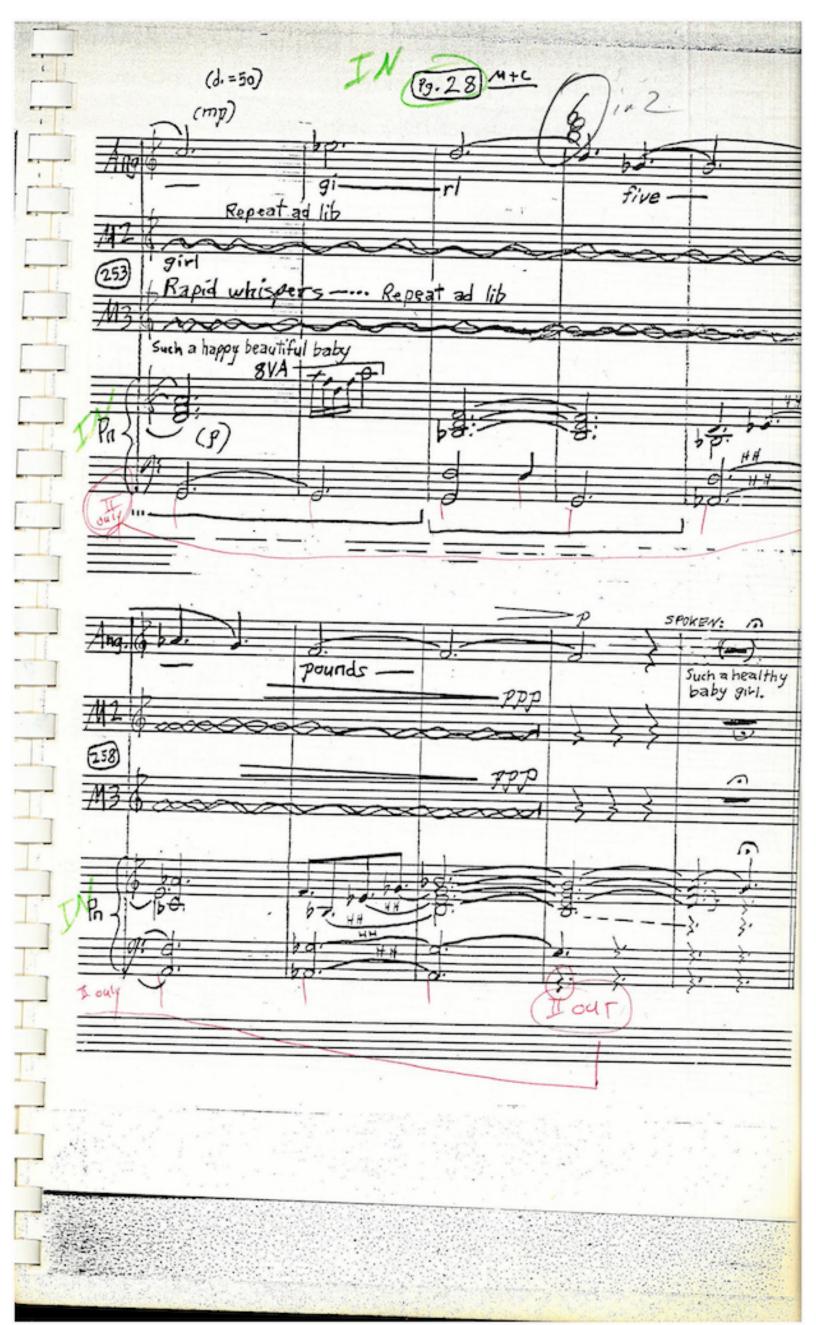












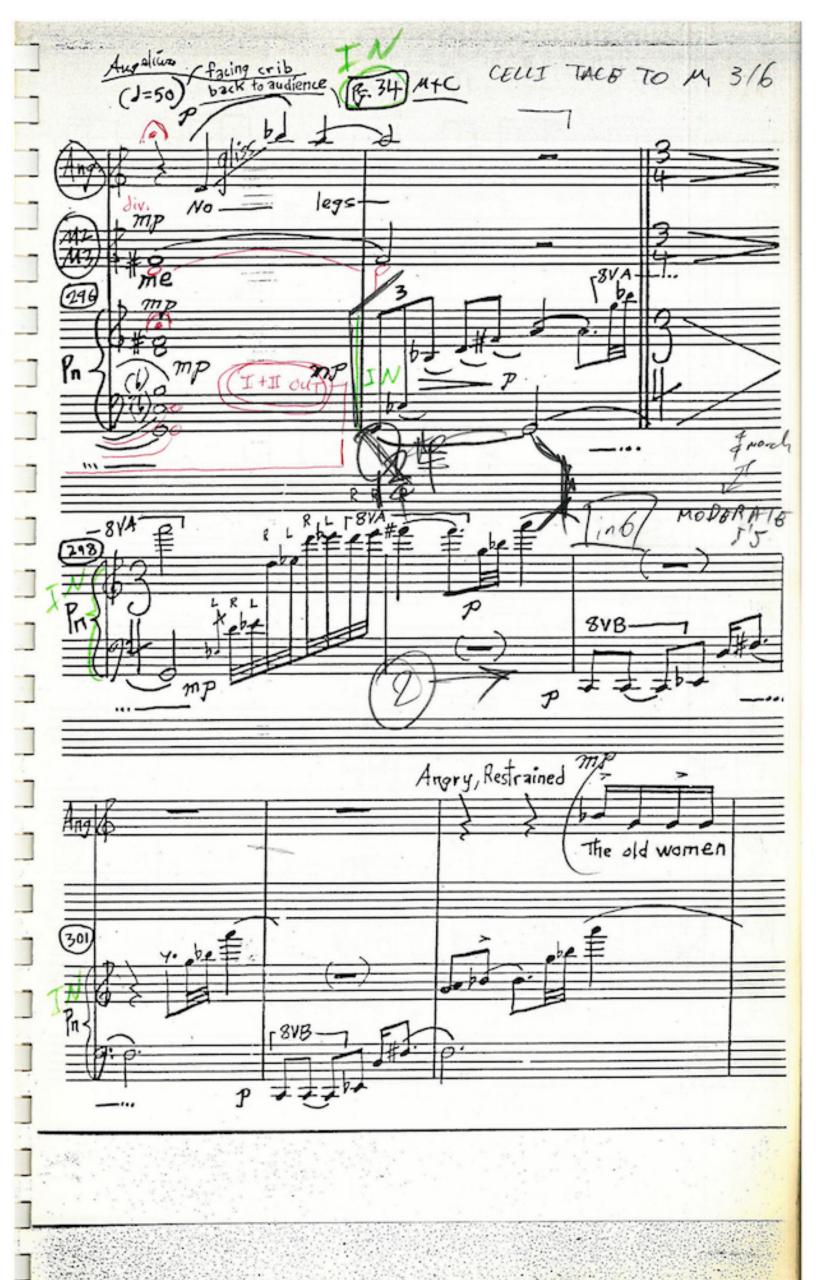








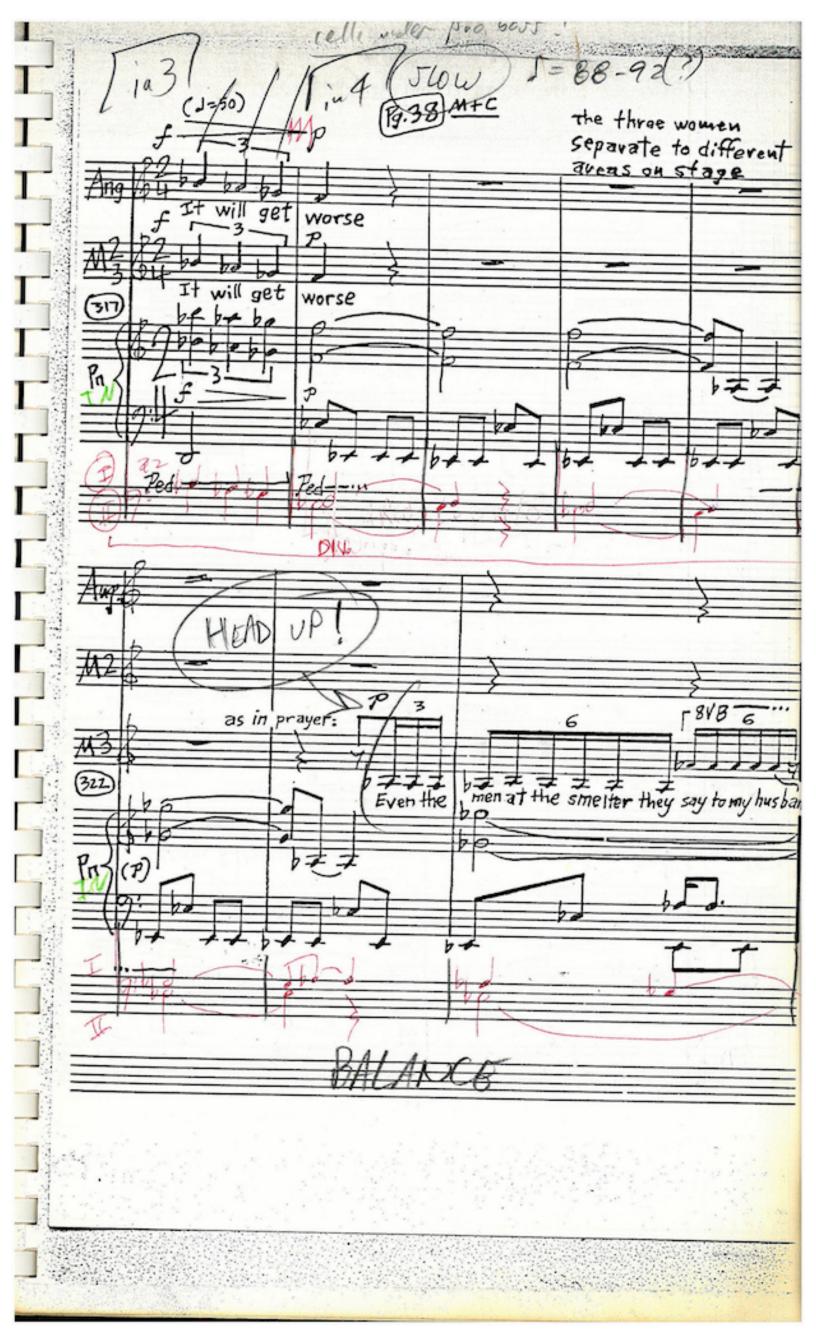


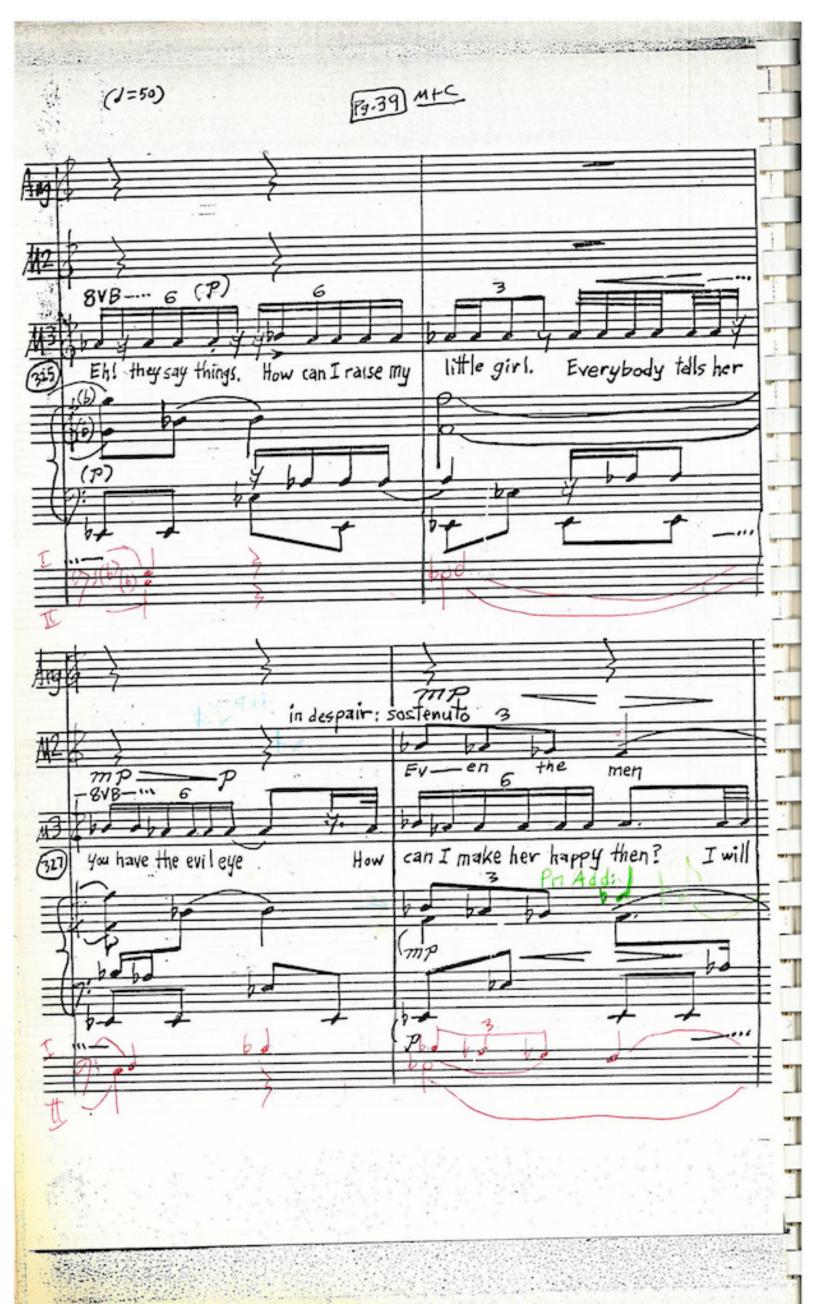


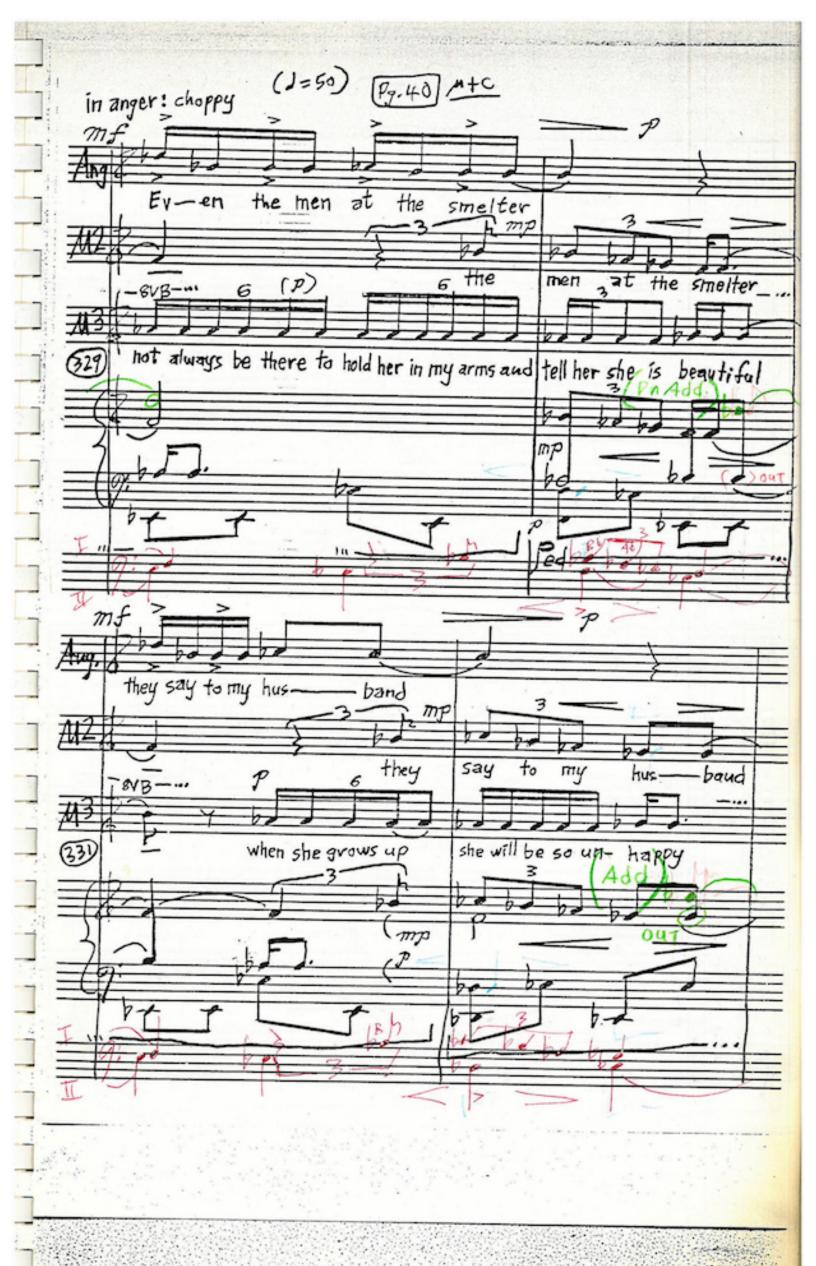




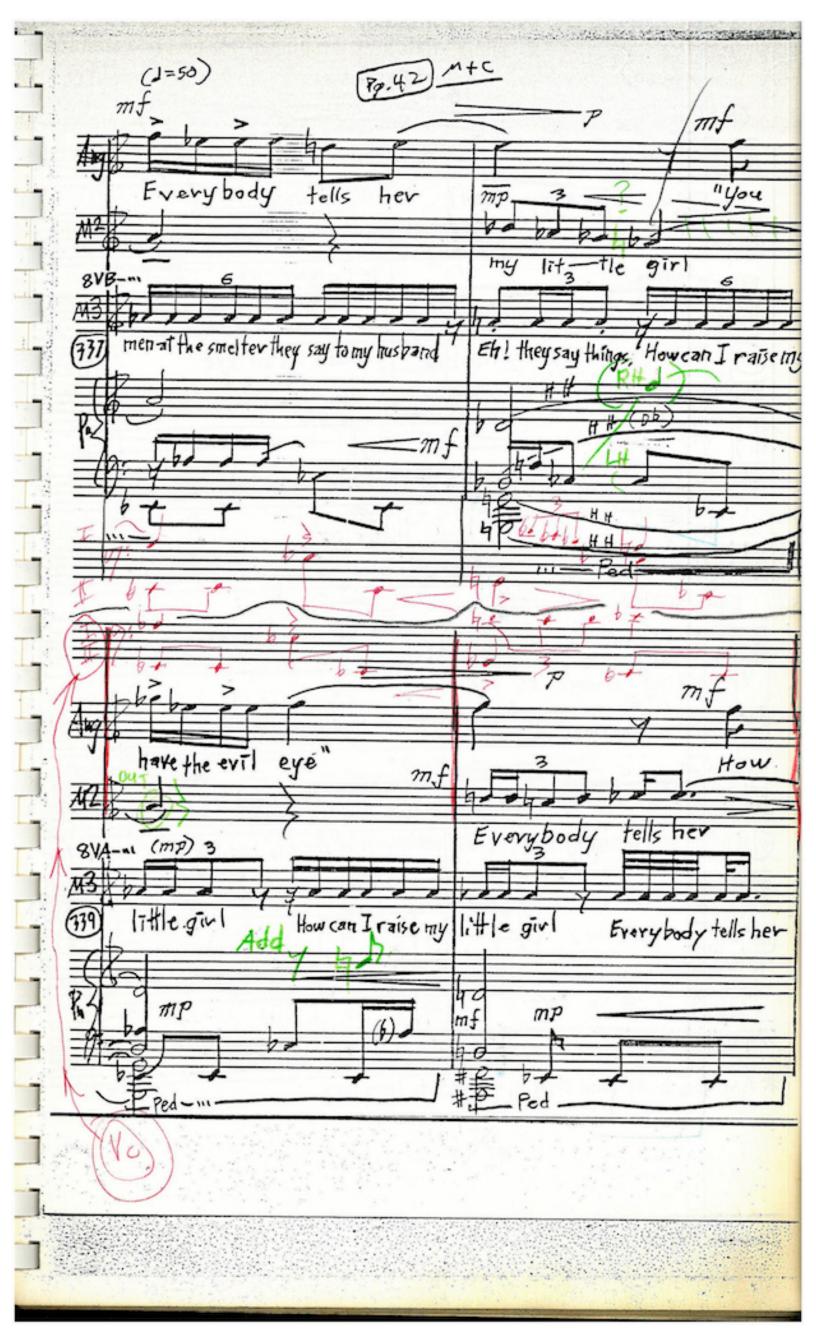






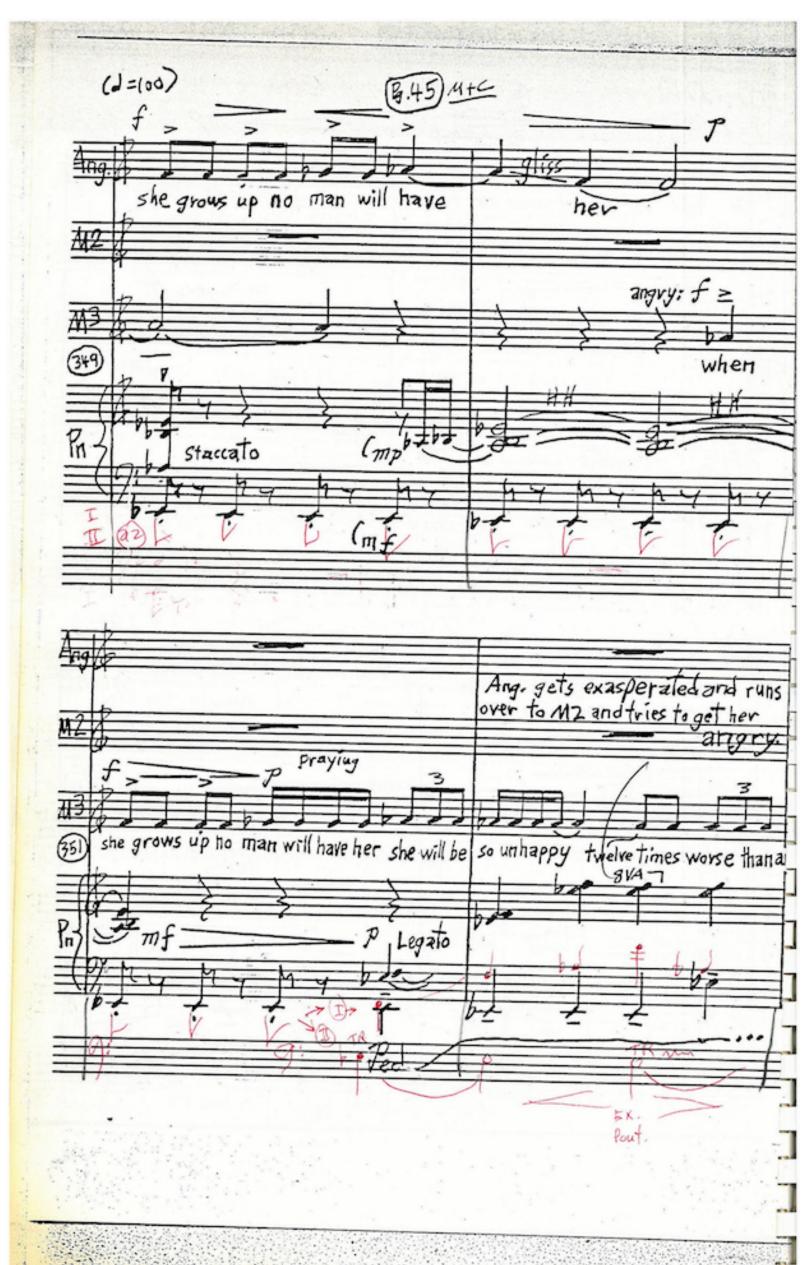






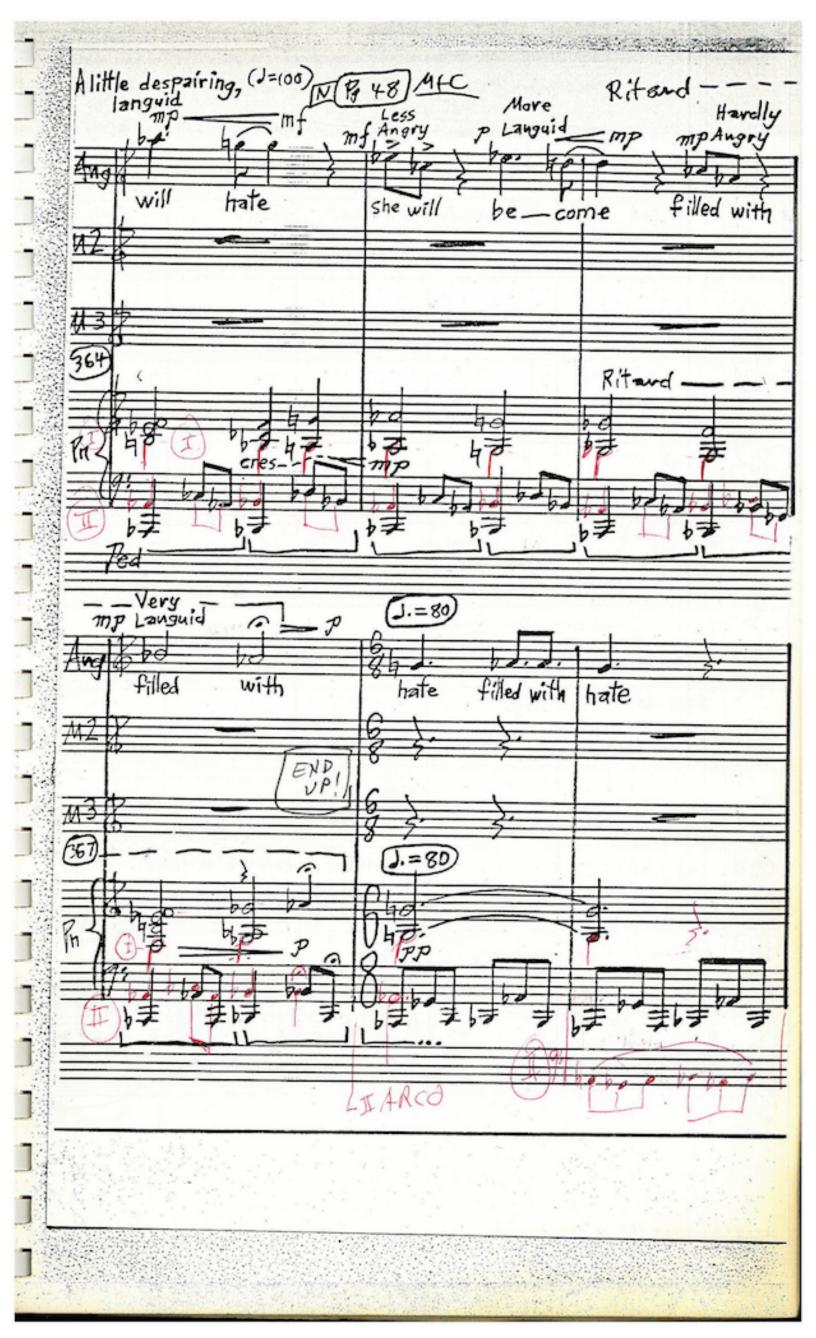


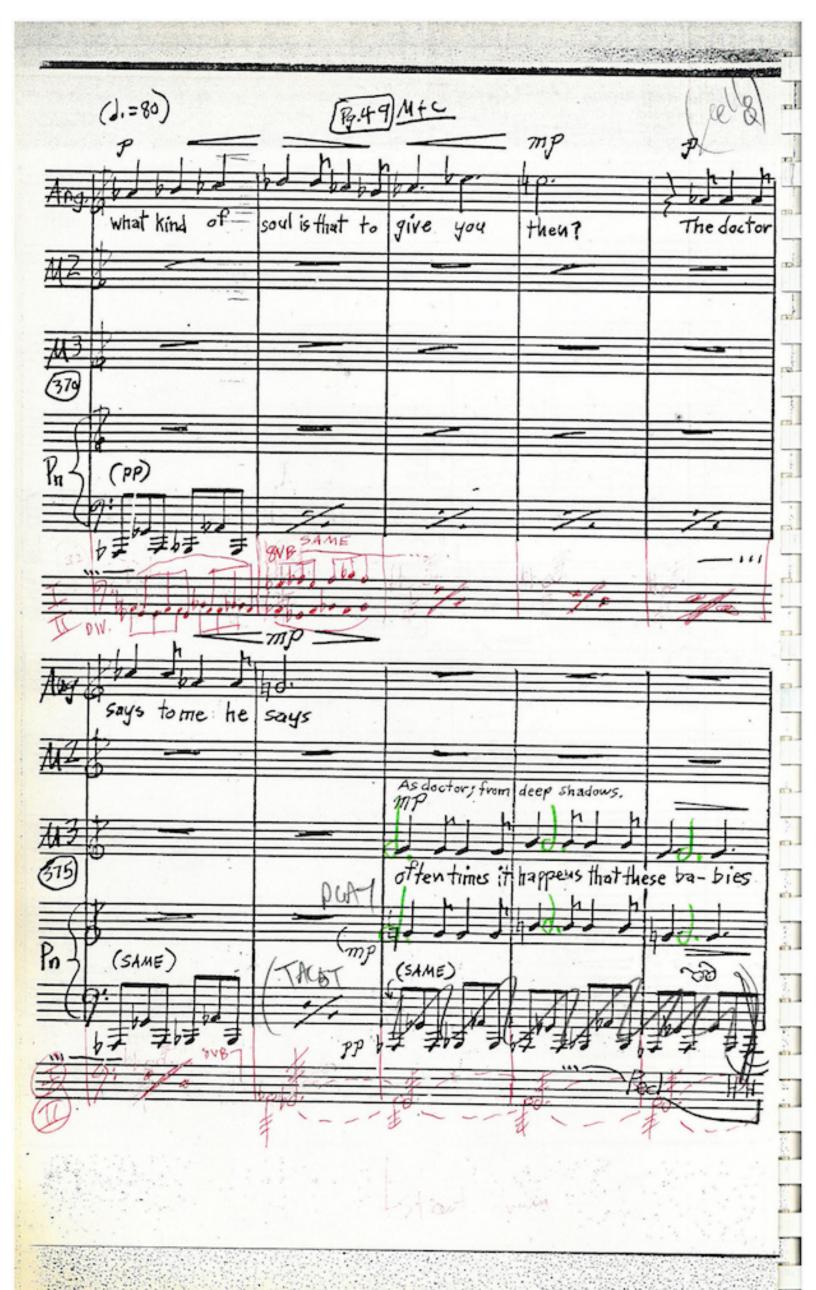


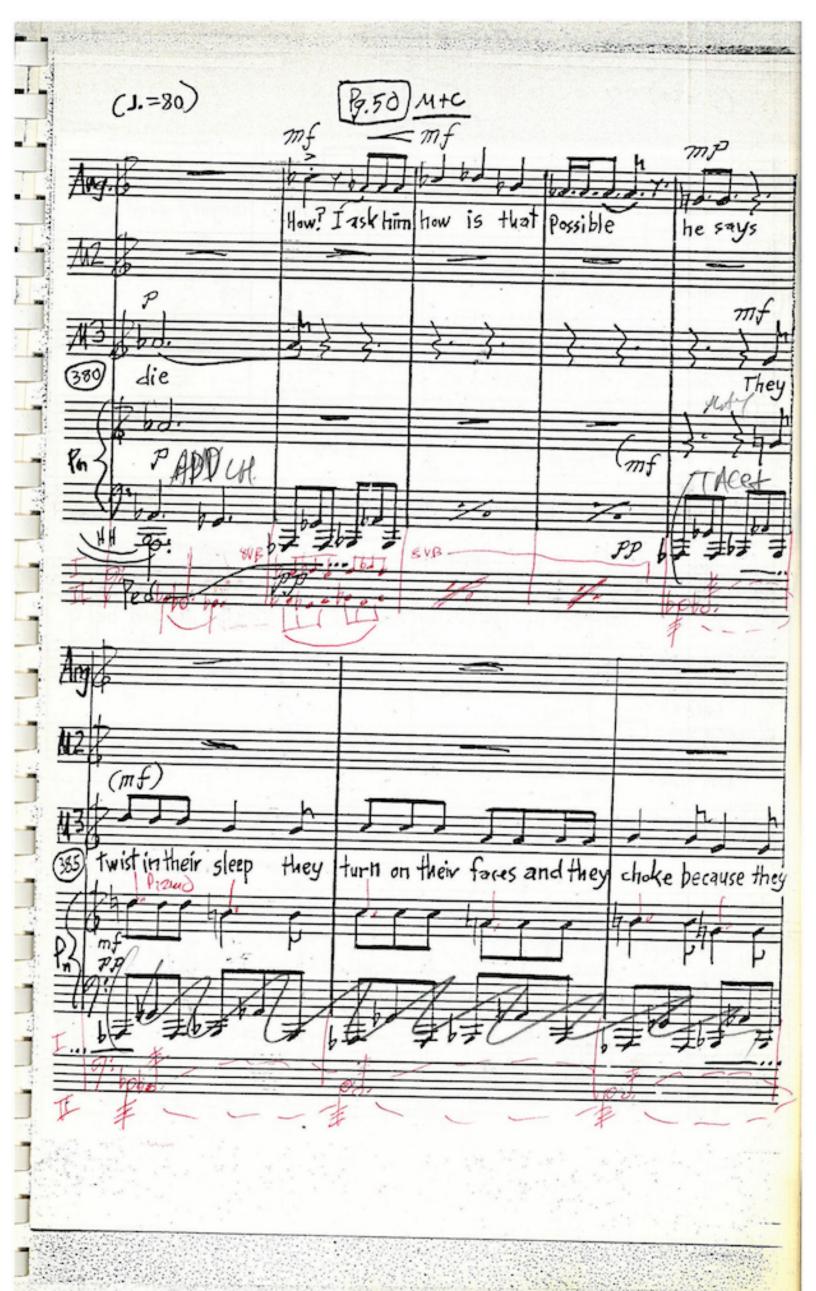


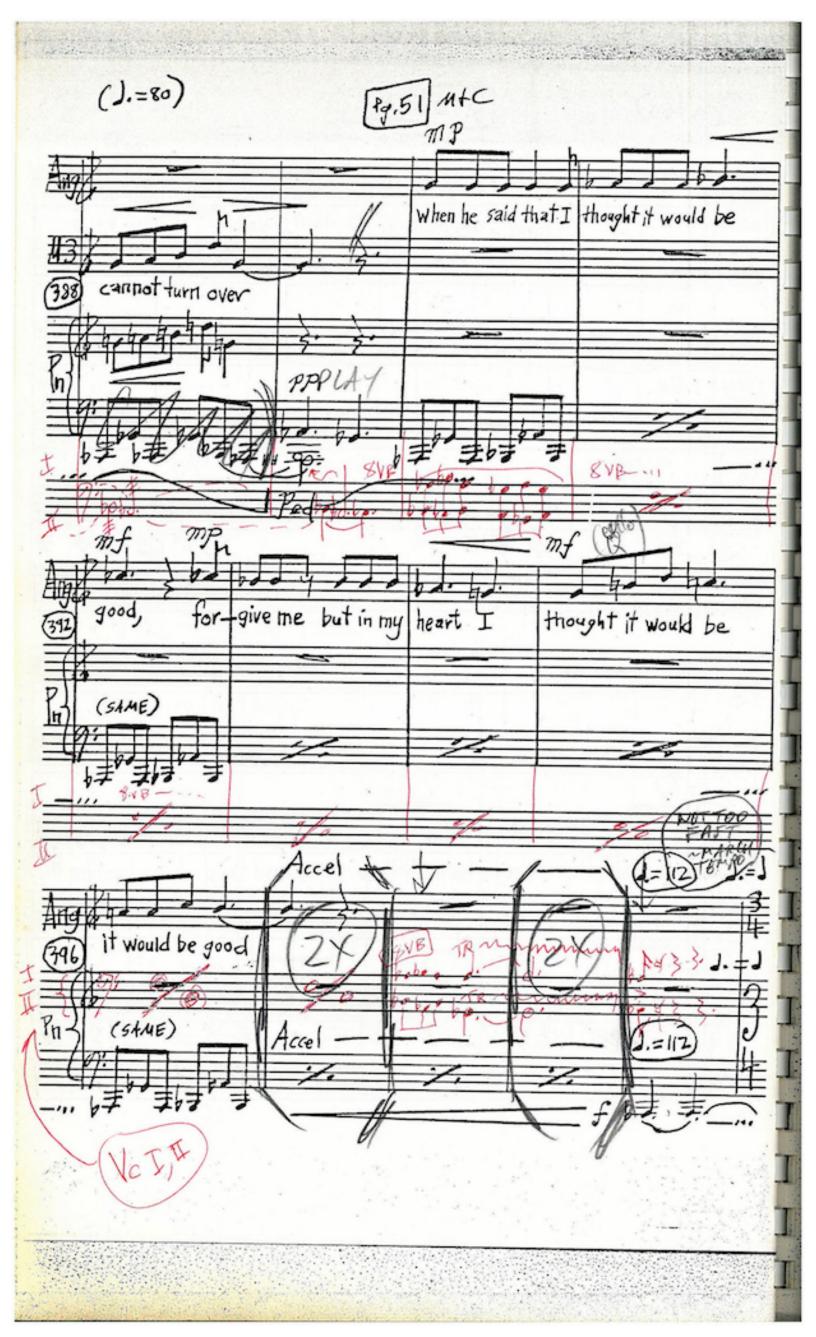




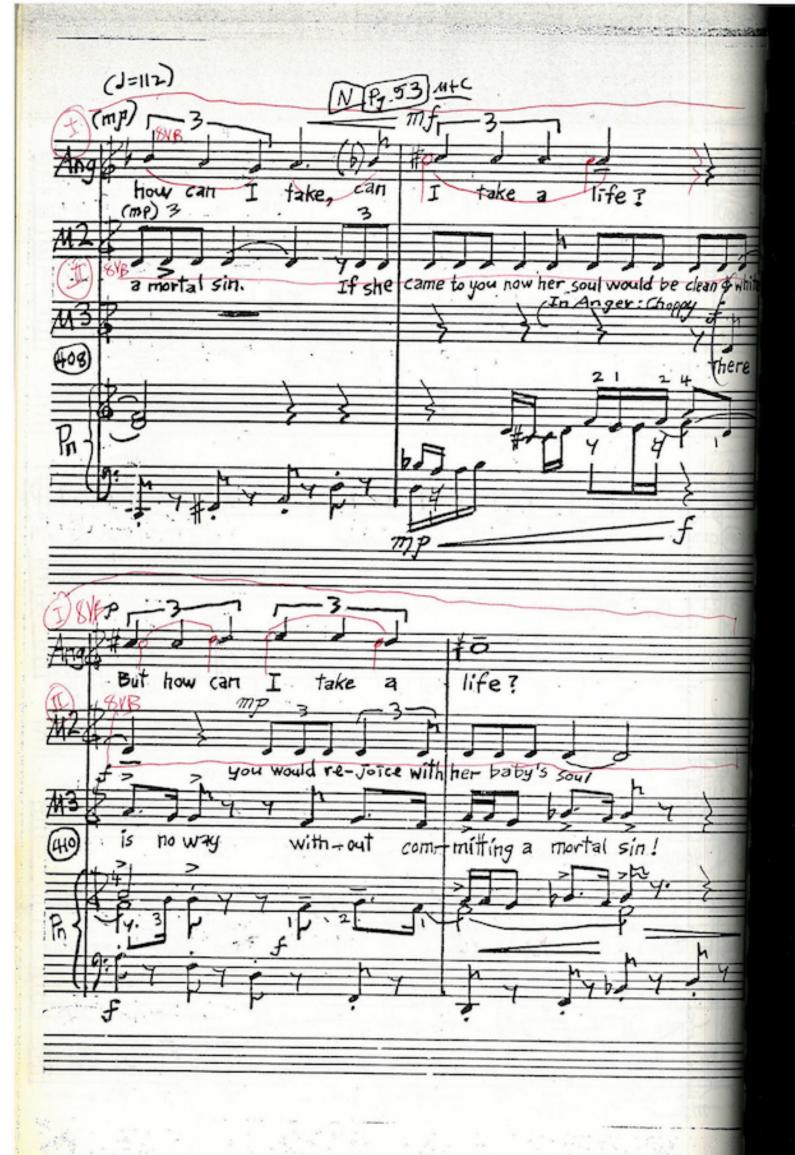






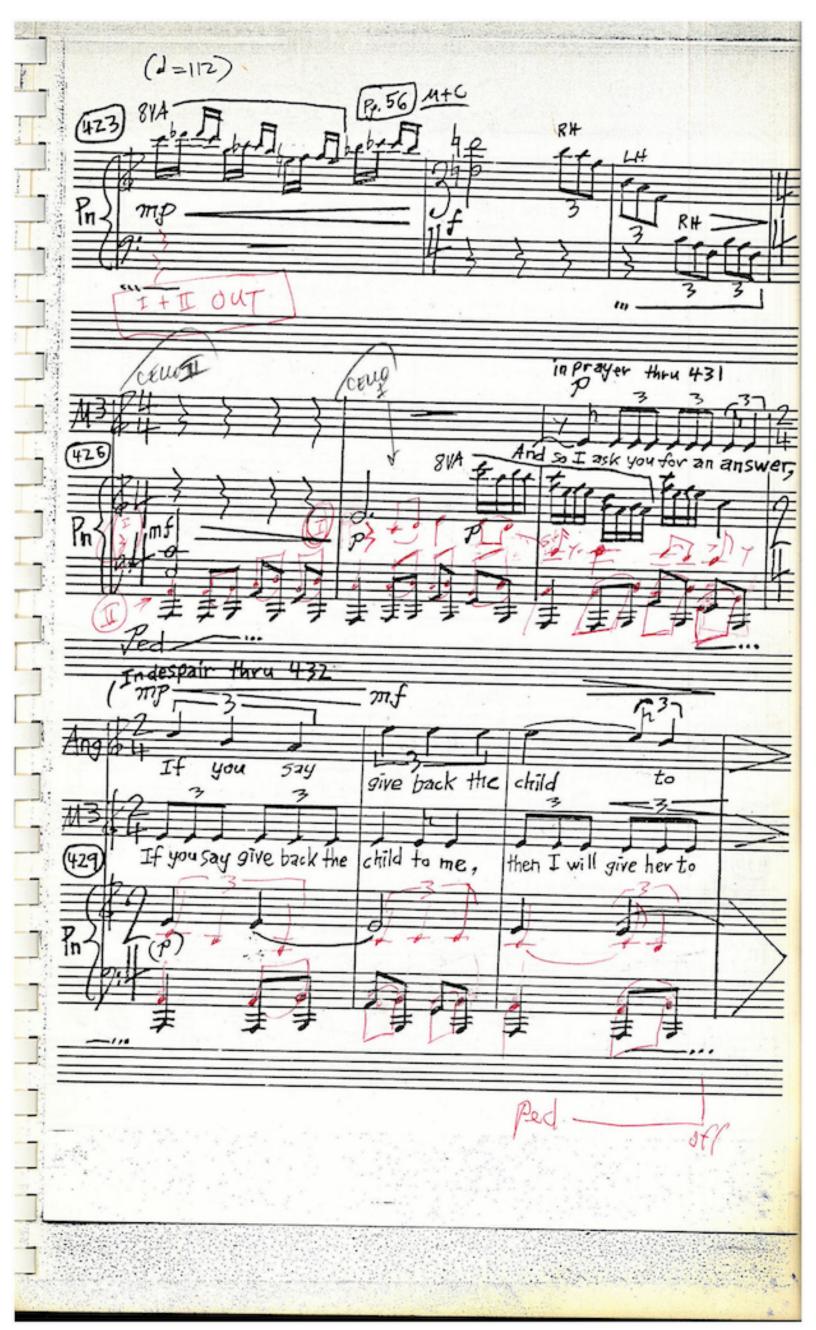










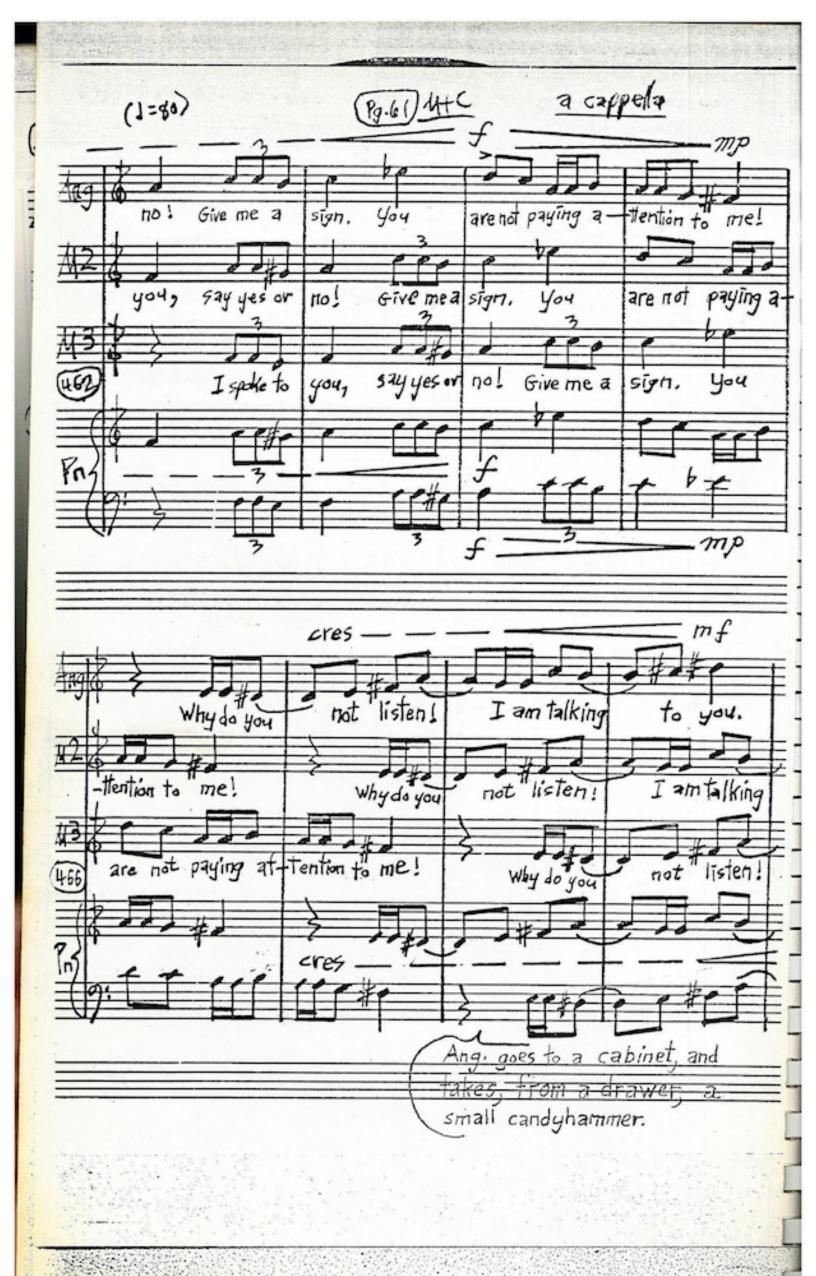


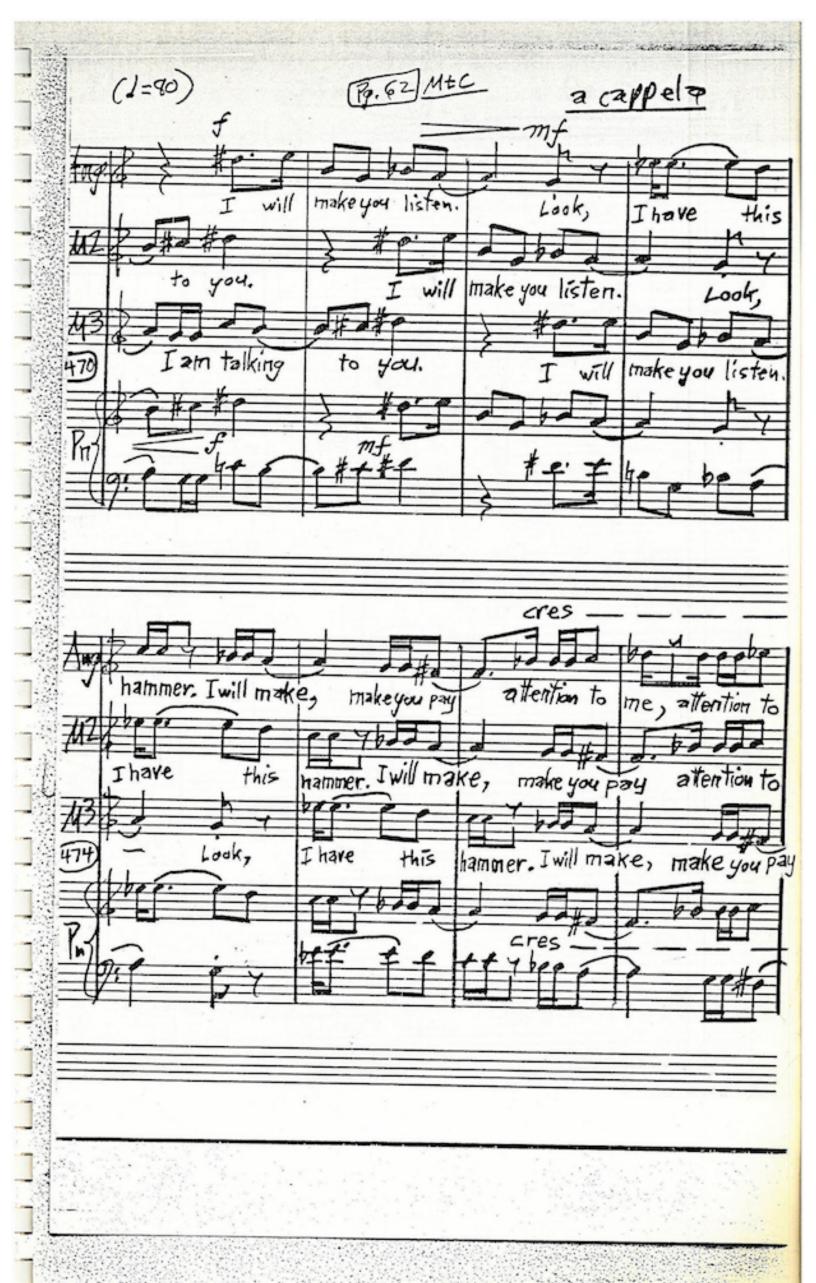


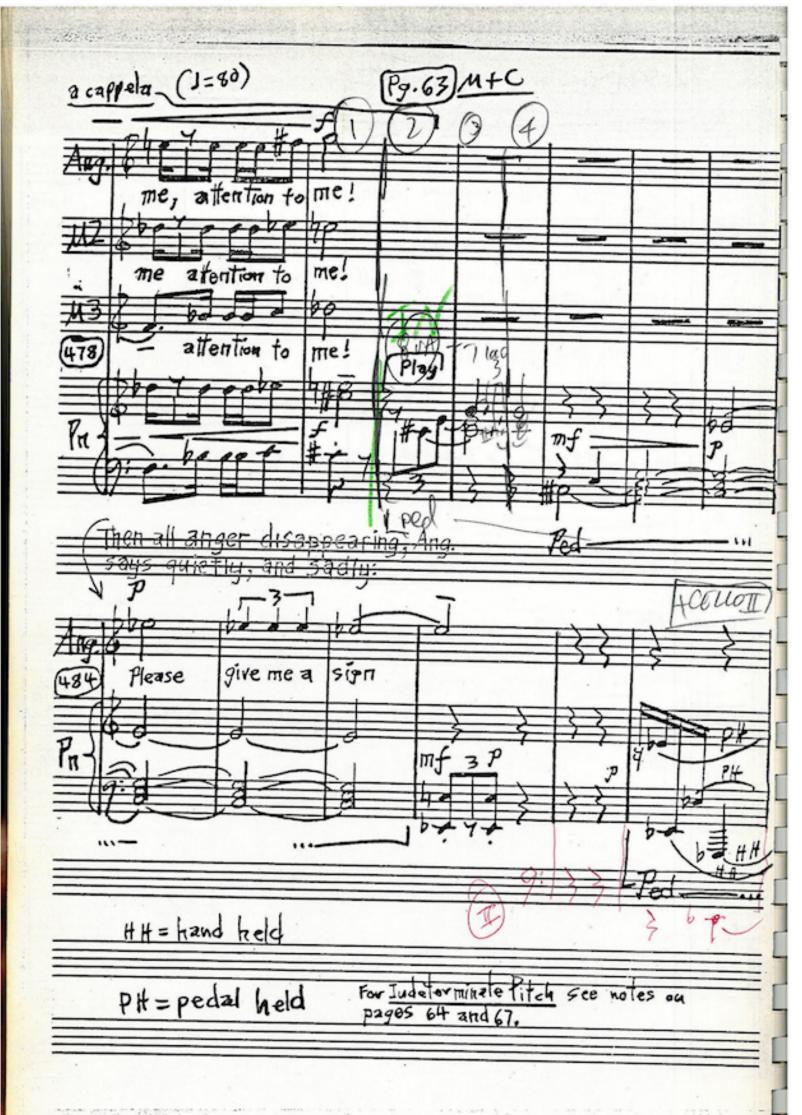




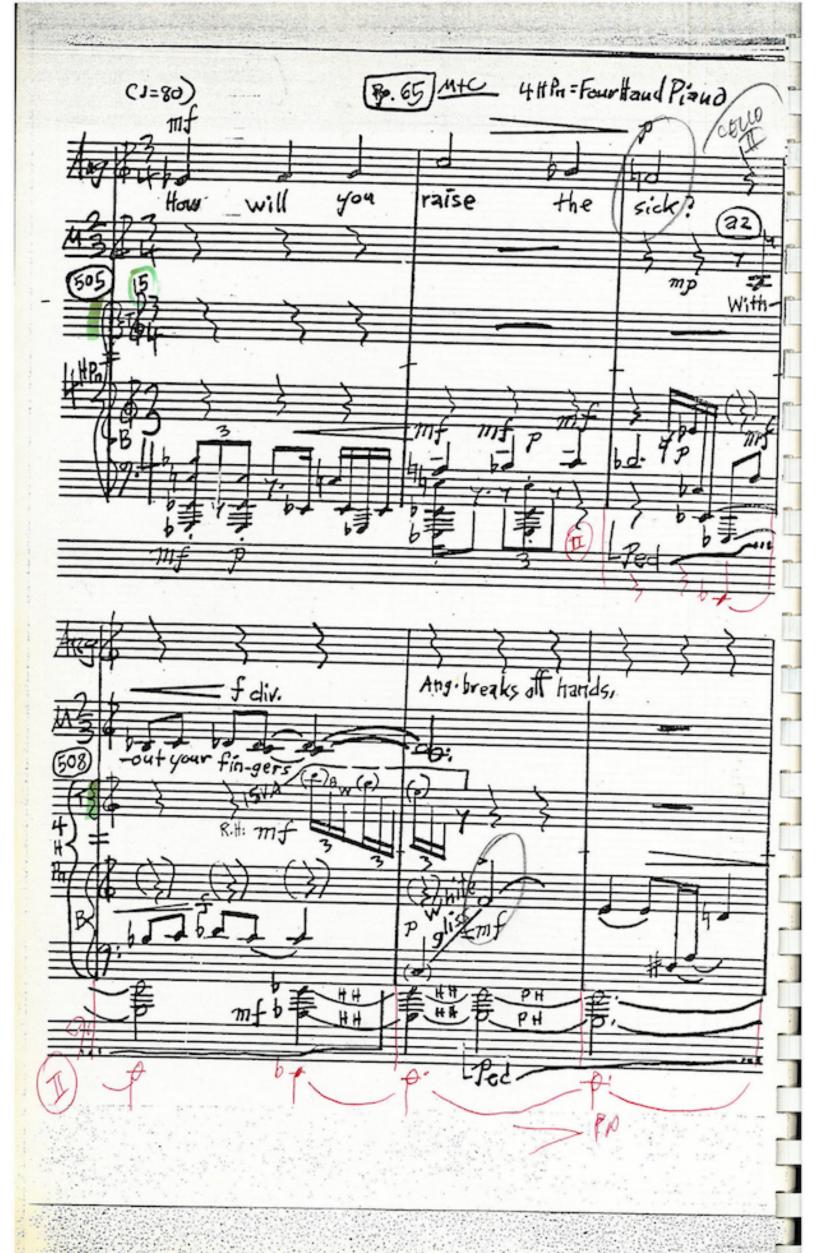




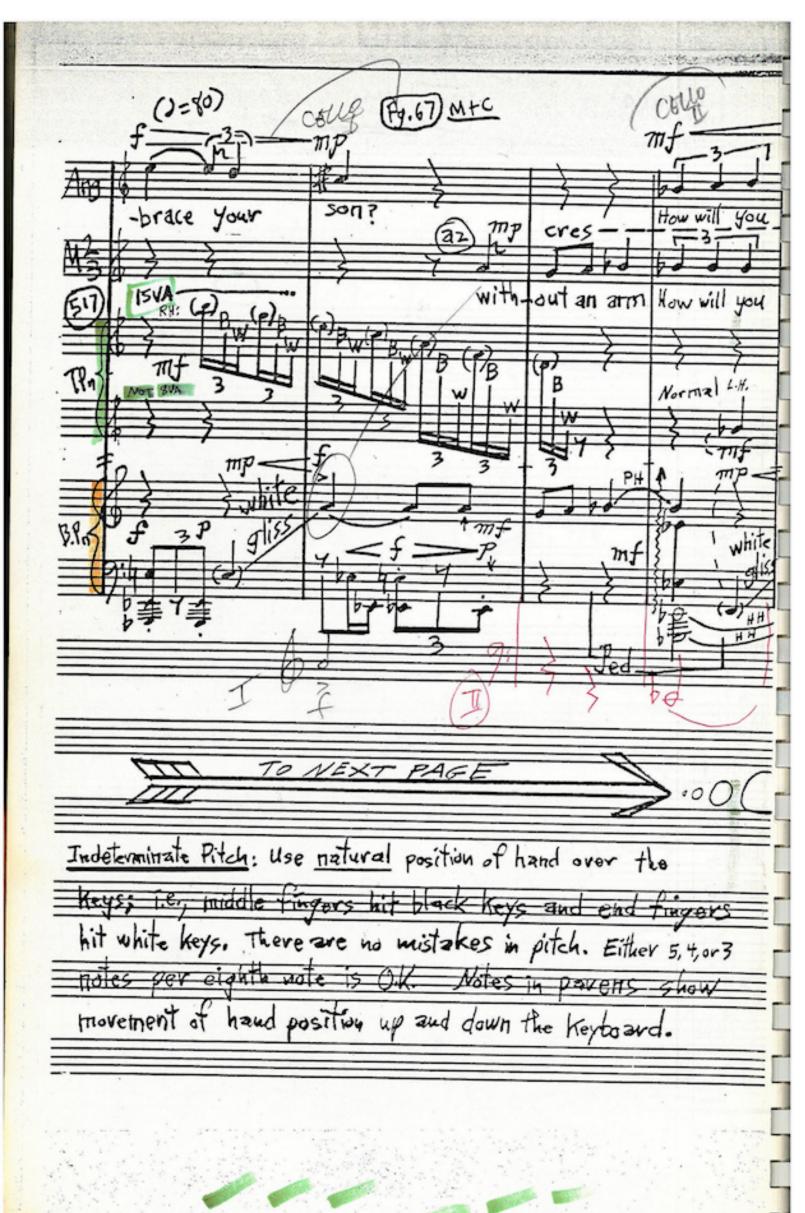


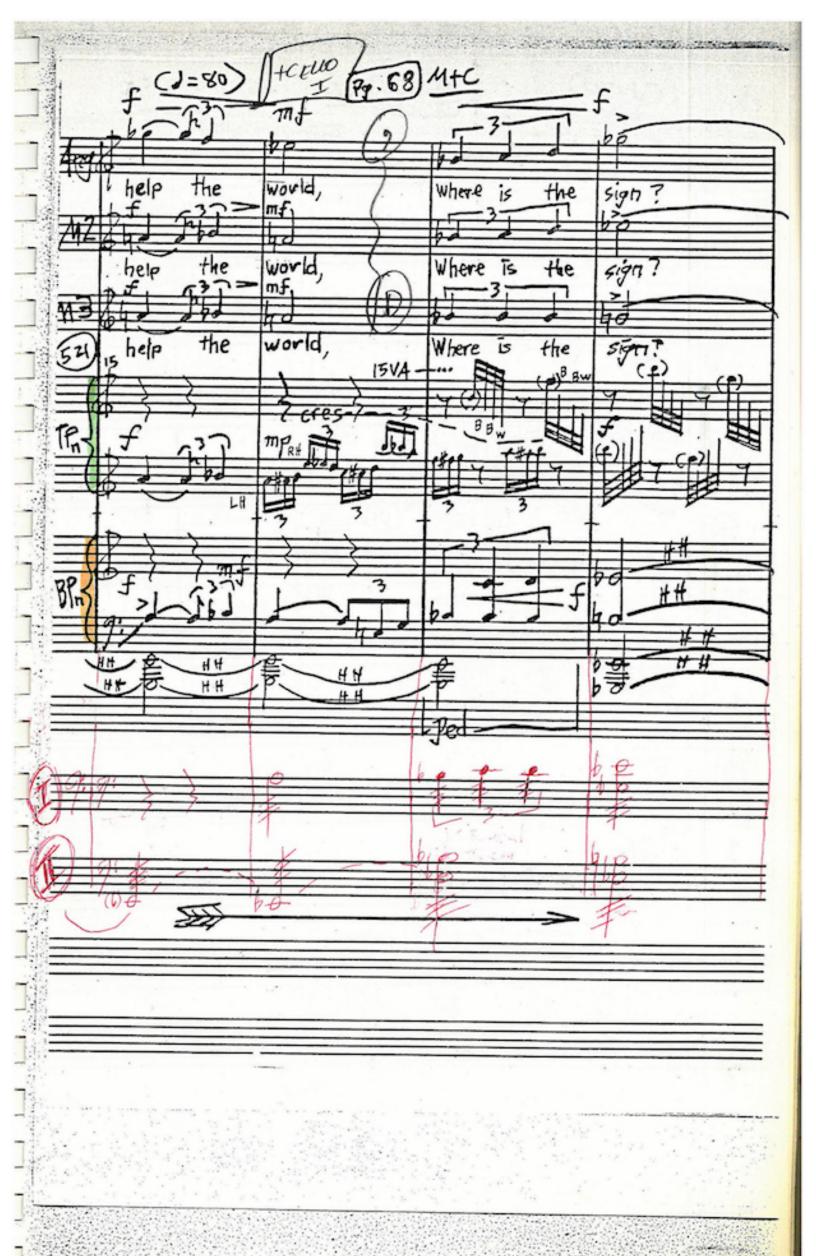


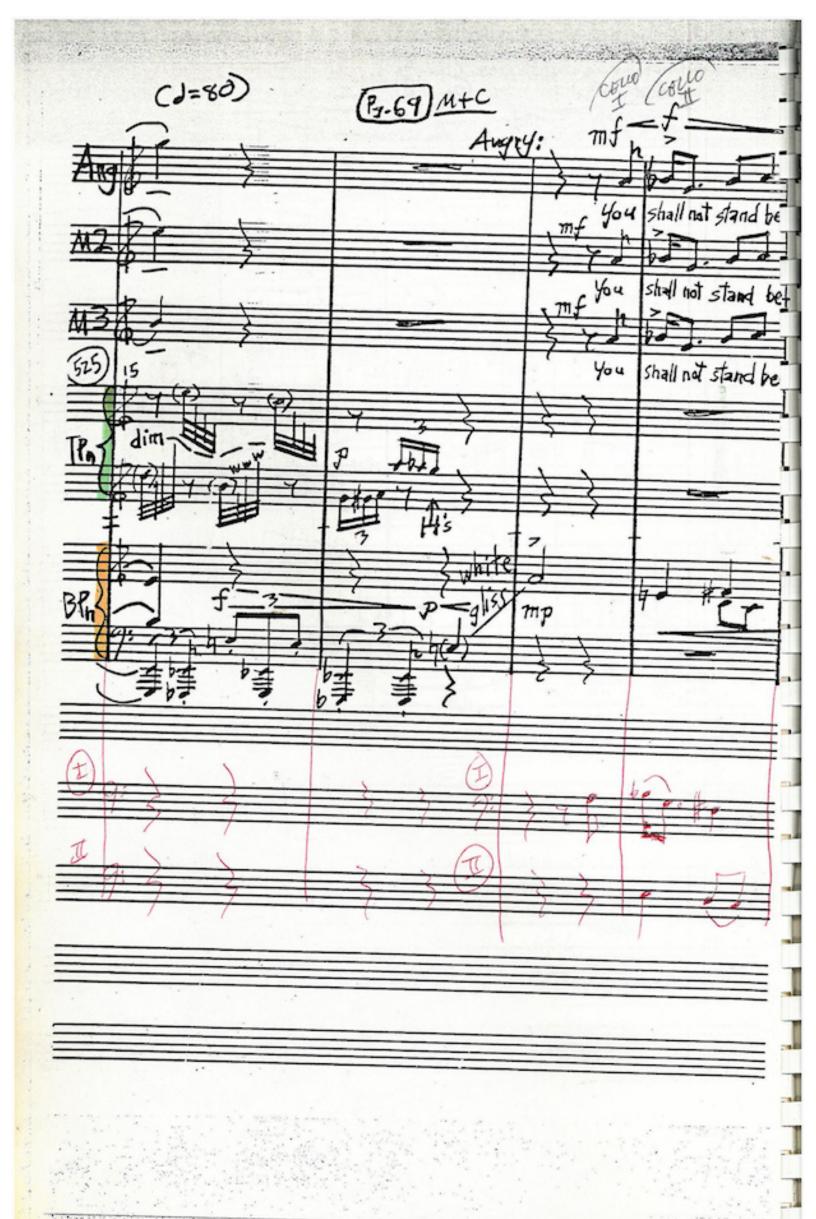






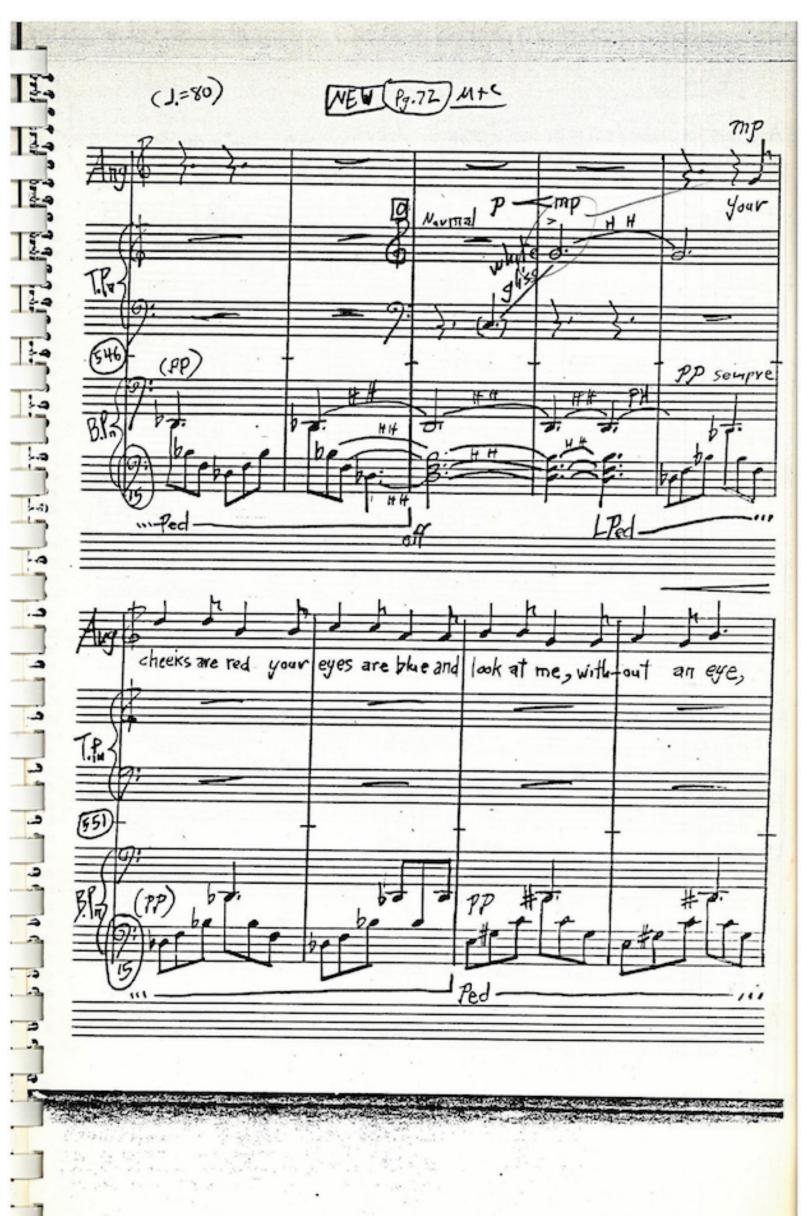


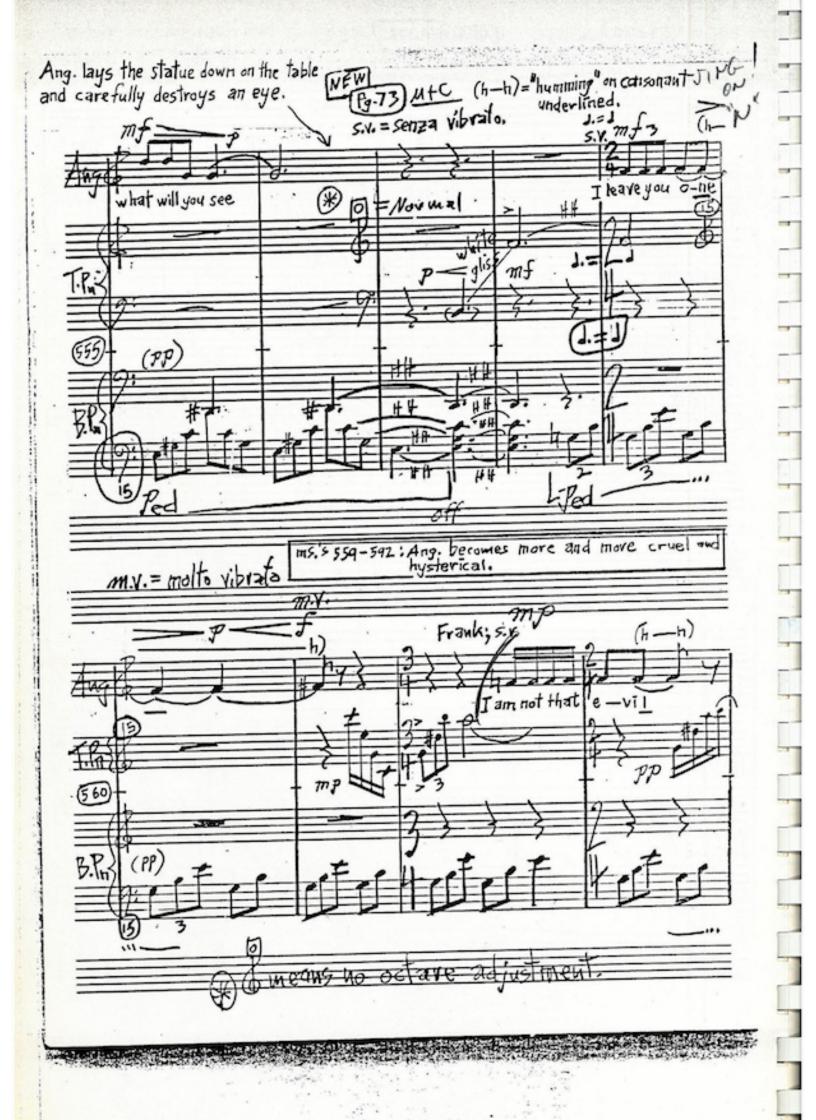














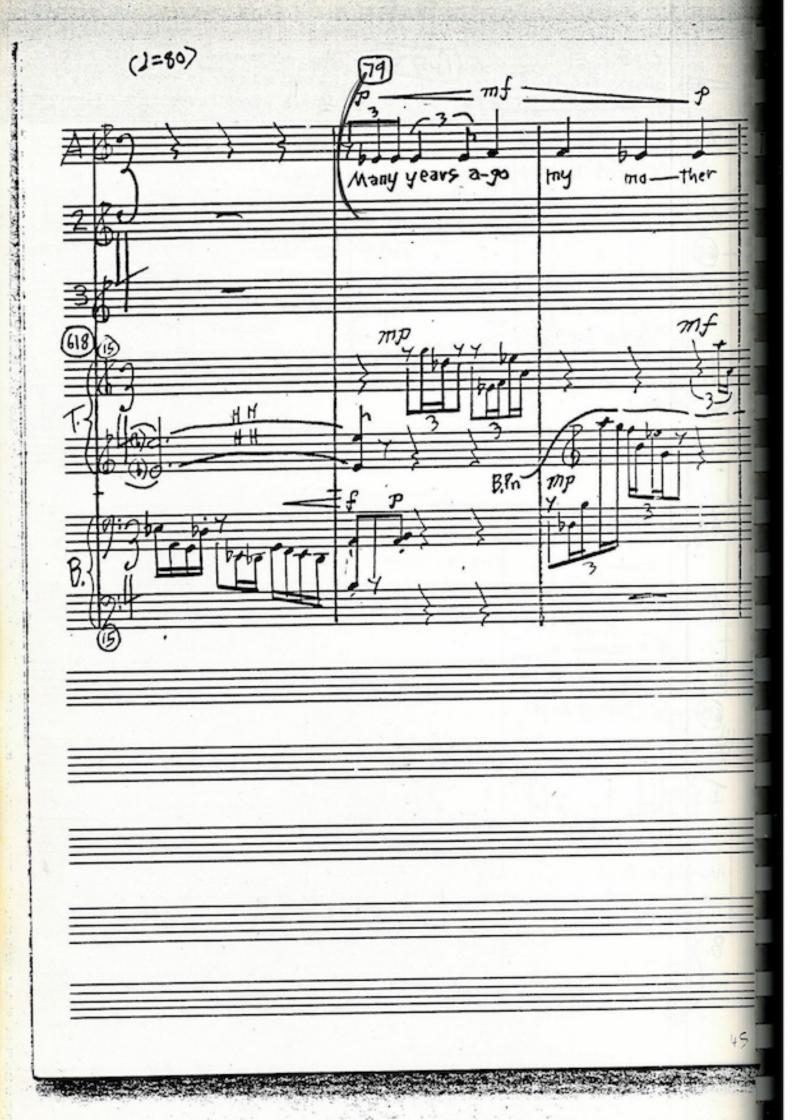


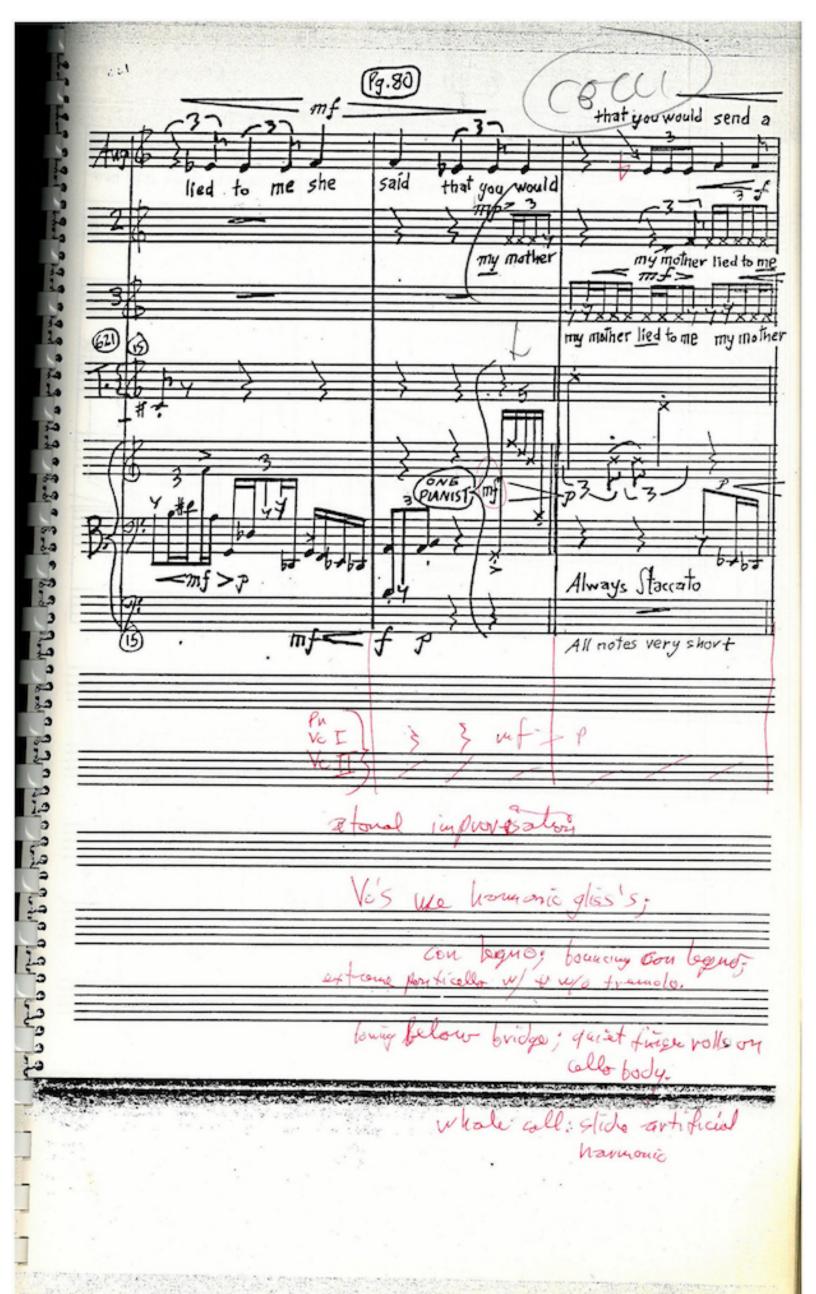


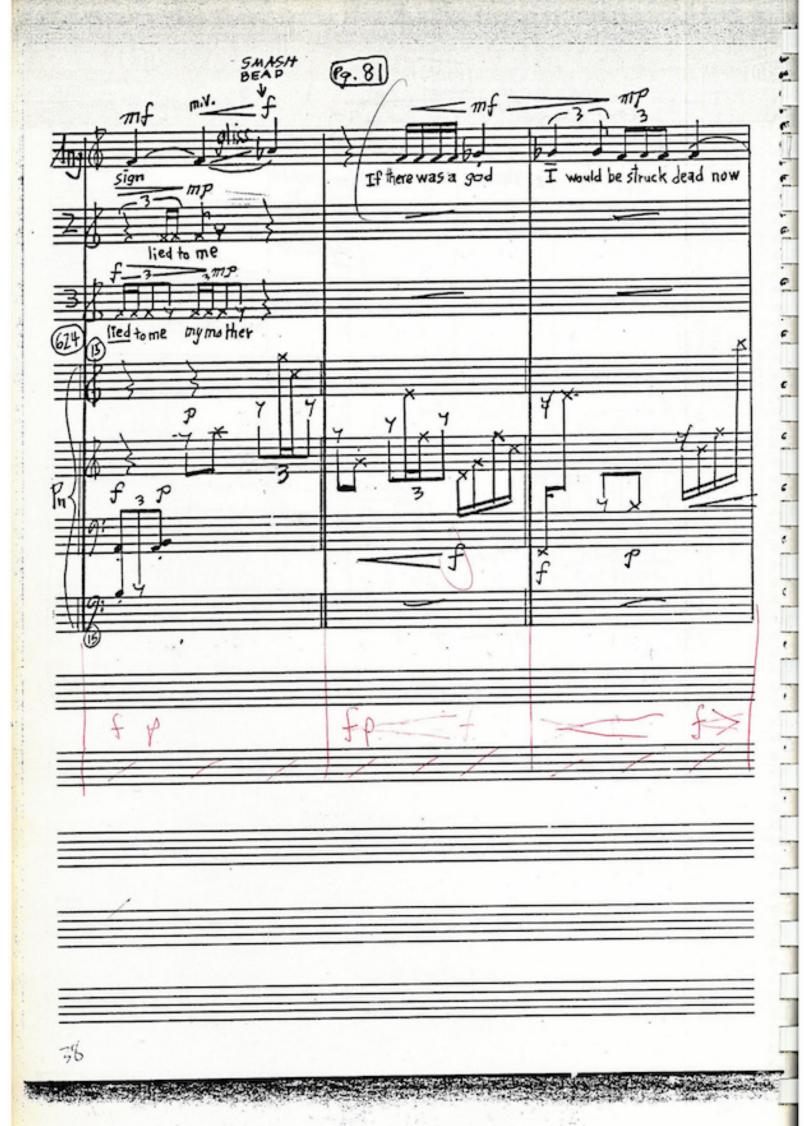
+M2,M3?







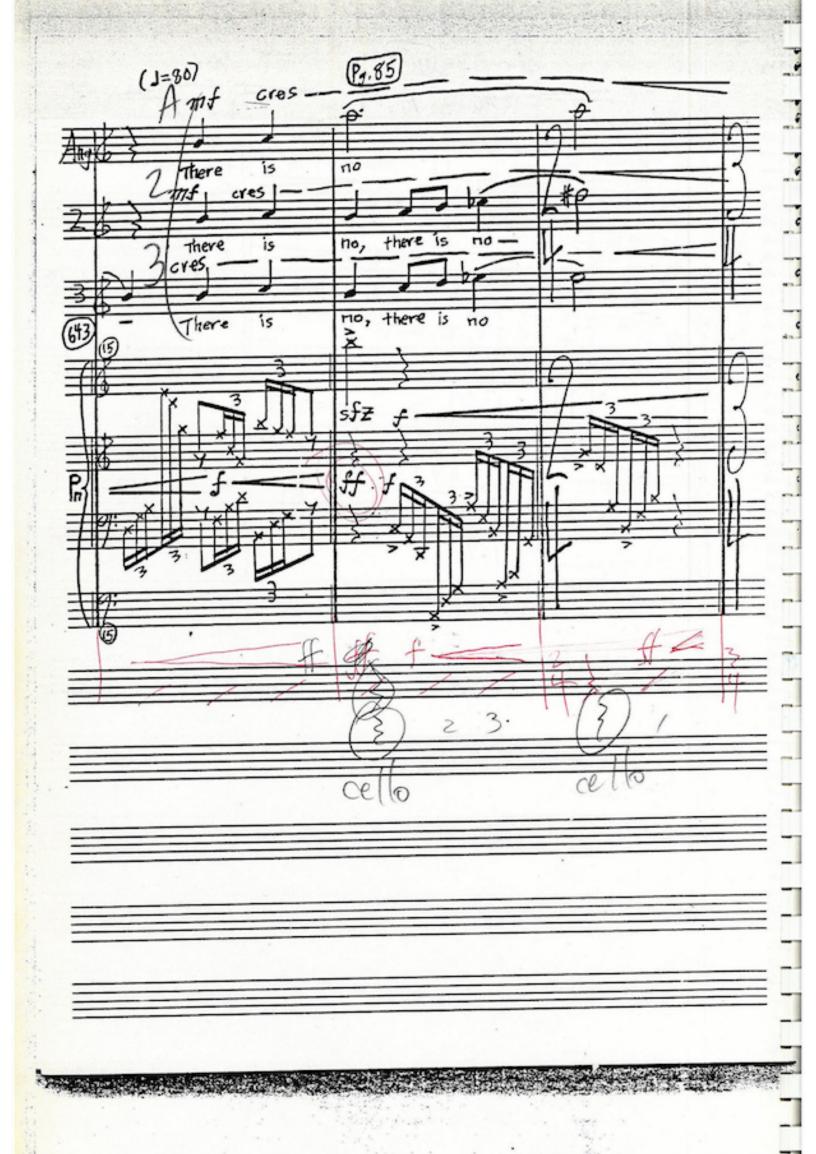














measures 650-674

M2 exits to sing back stage.

M3 moves into shadows to whisper. Underlined words = accent.

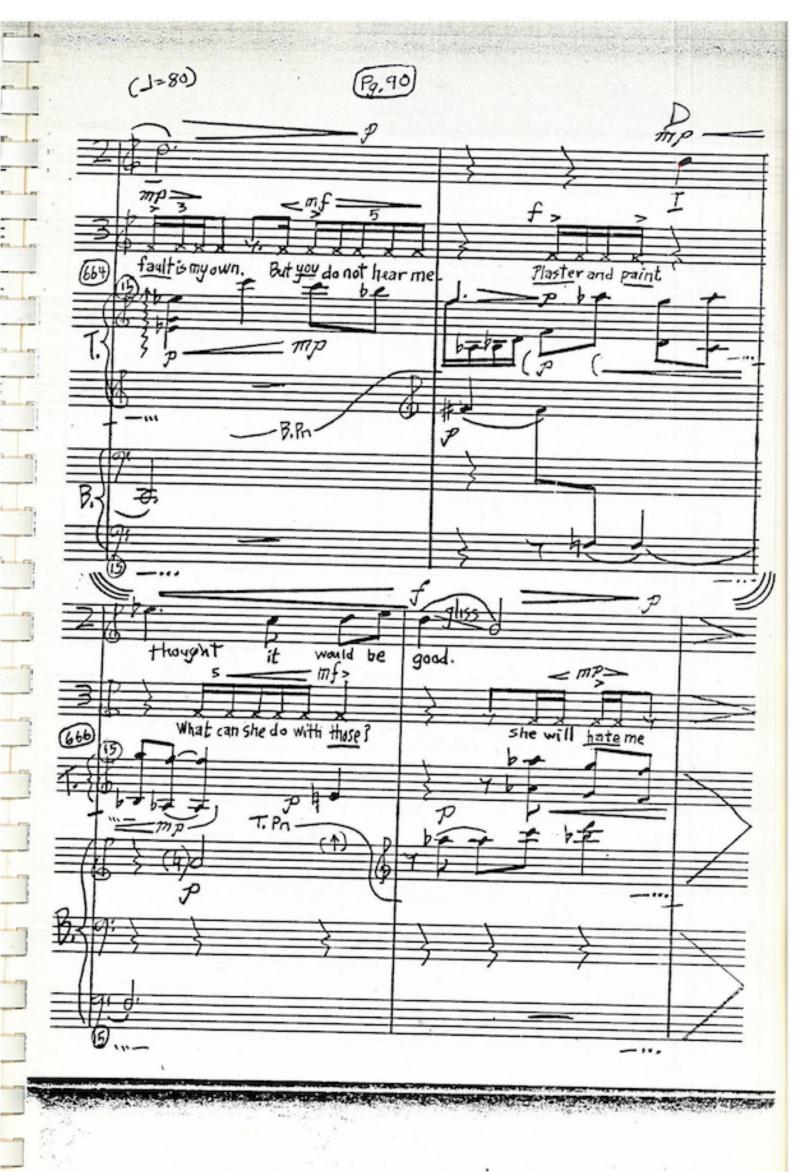
head bent over; audience connot see her face. Lights very slowly fodeout except for overhead spot on Ang. As 112 and 113 build

are voices within Augustina.

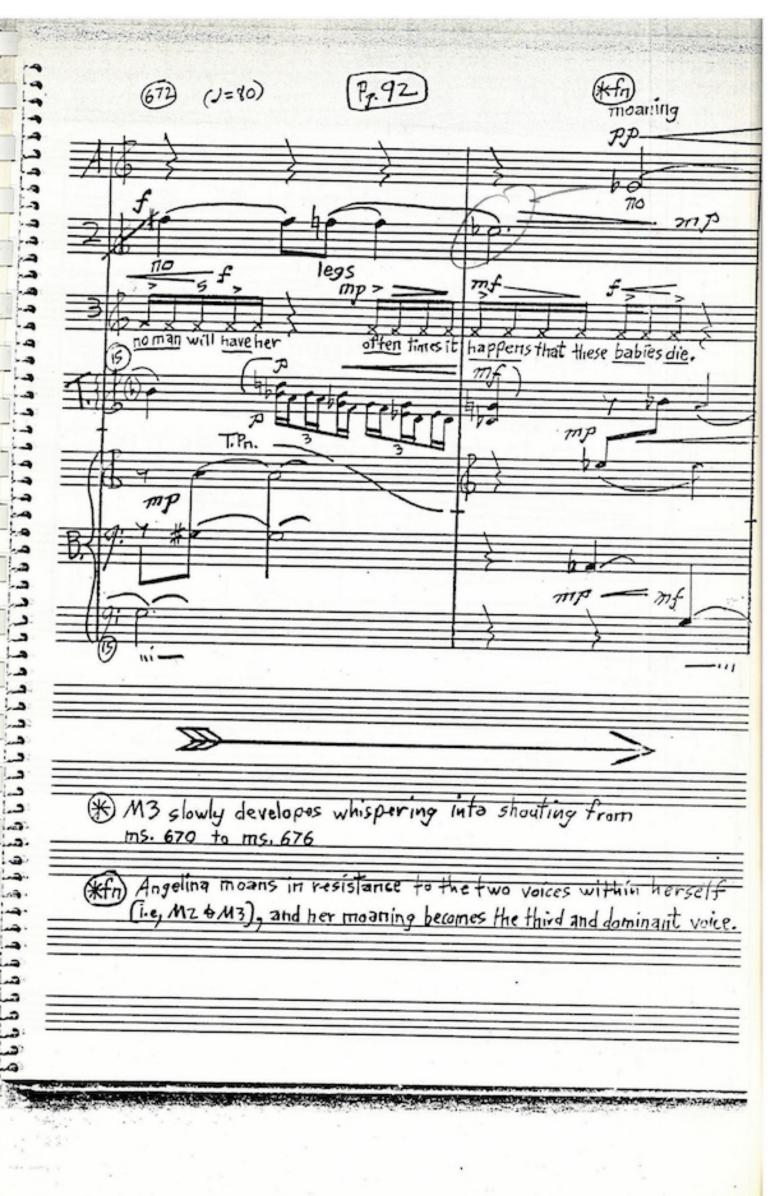


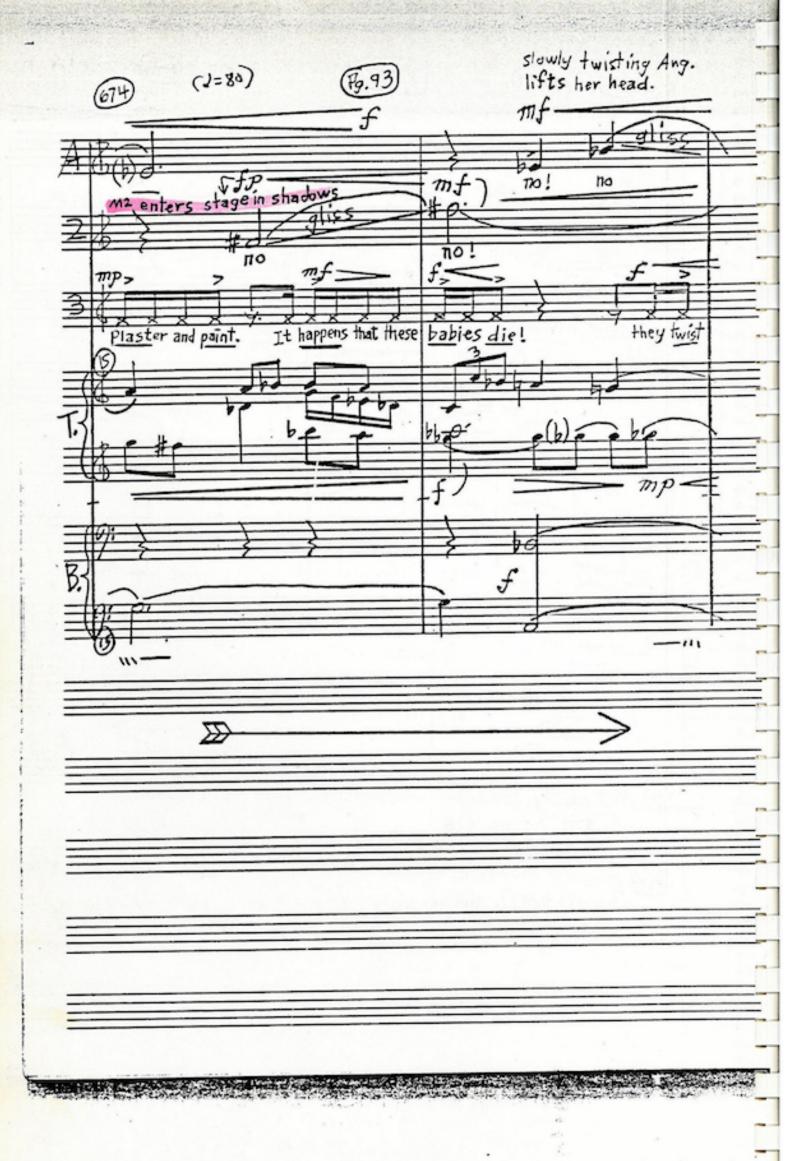








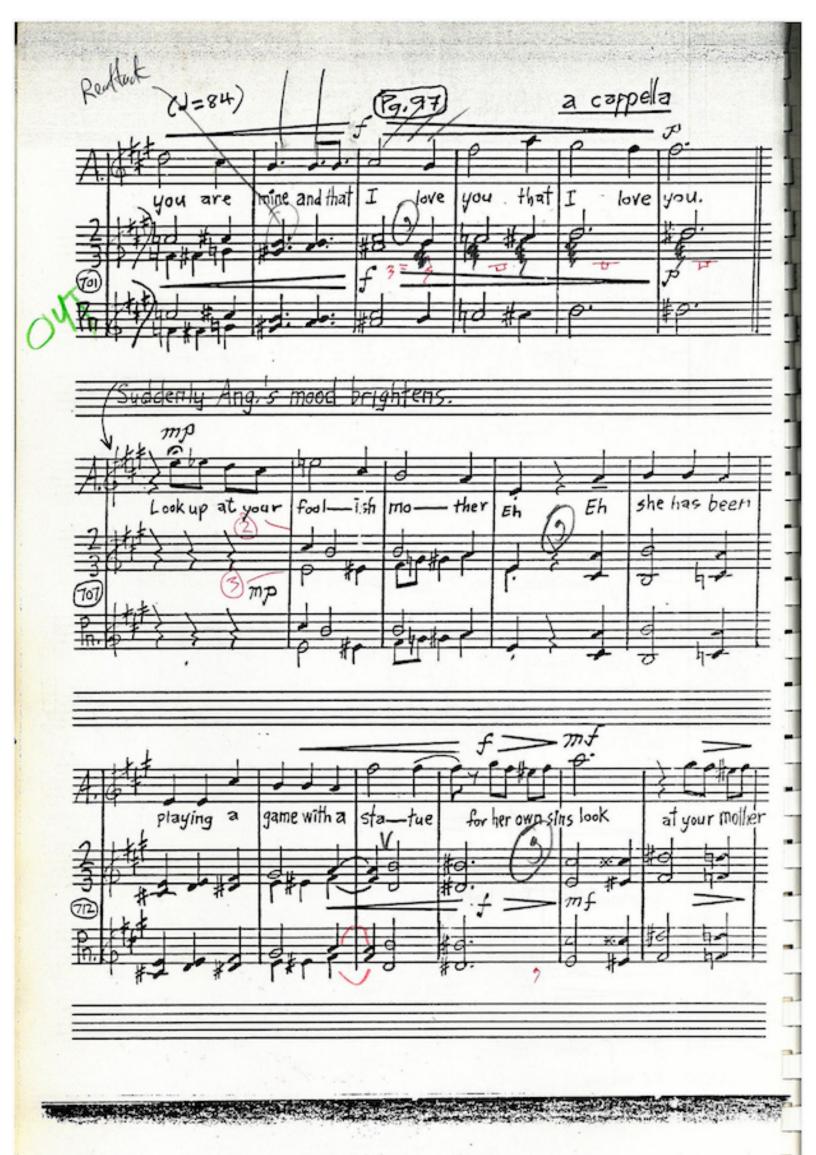




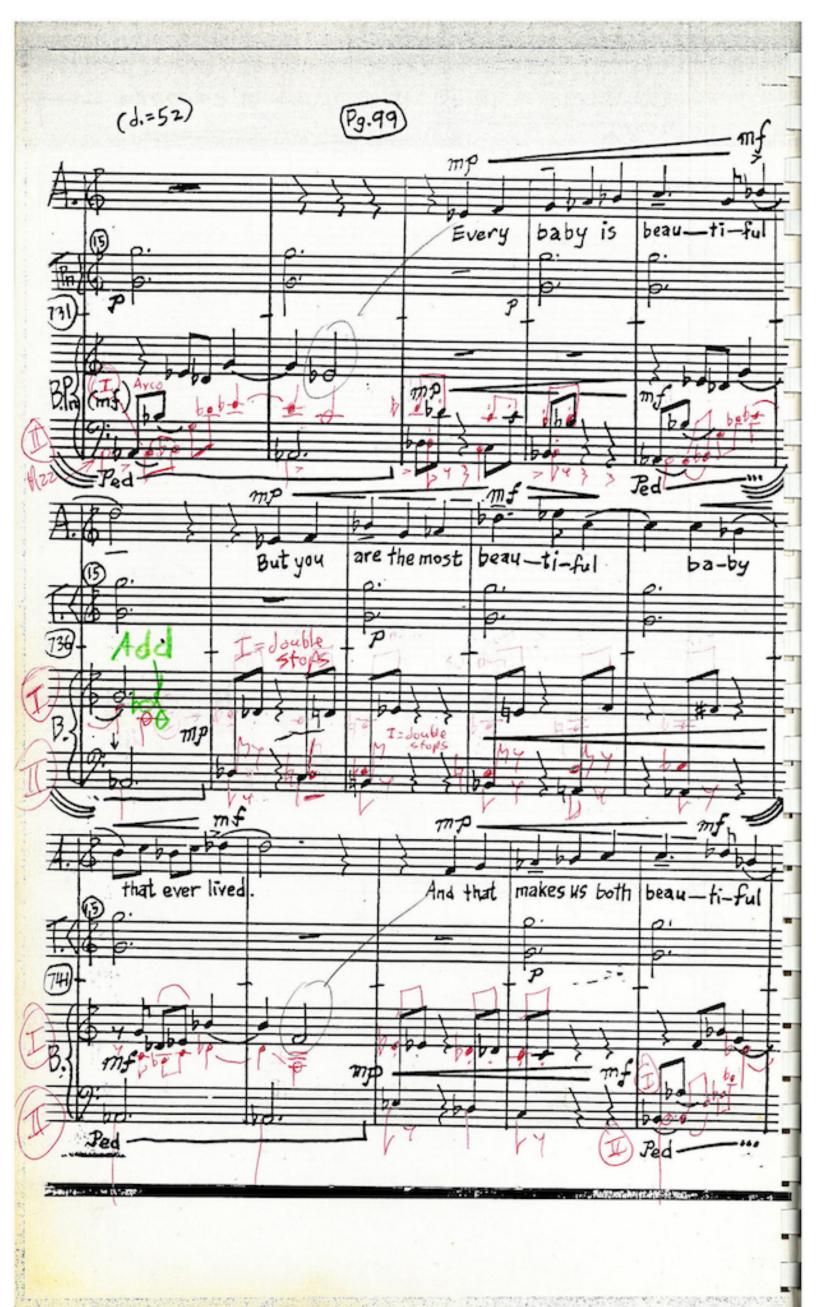


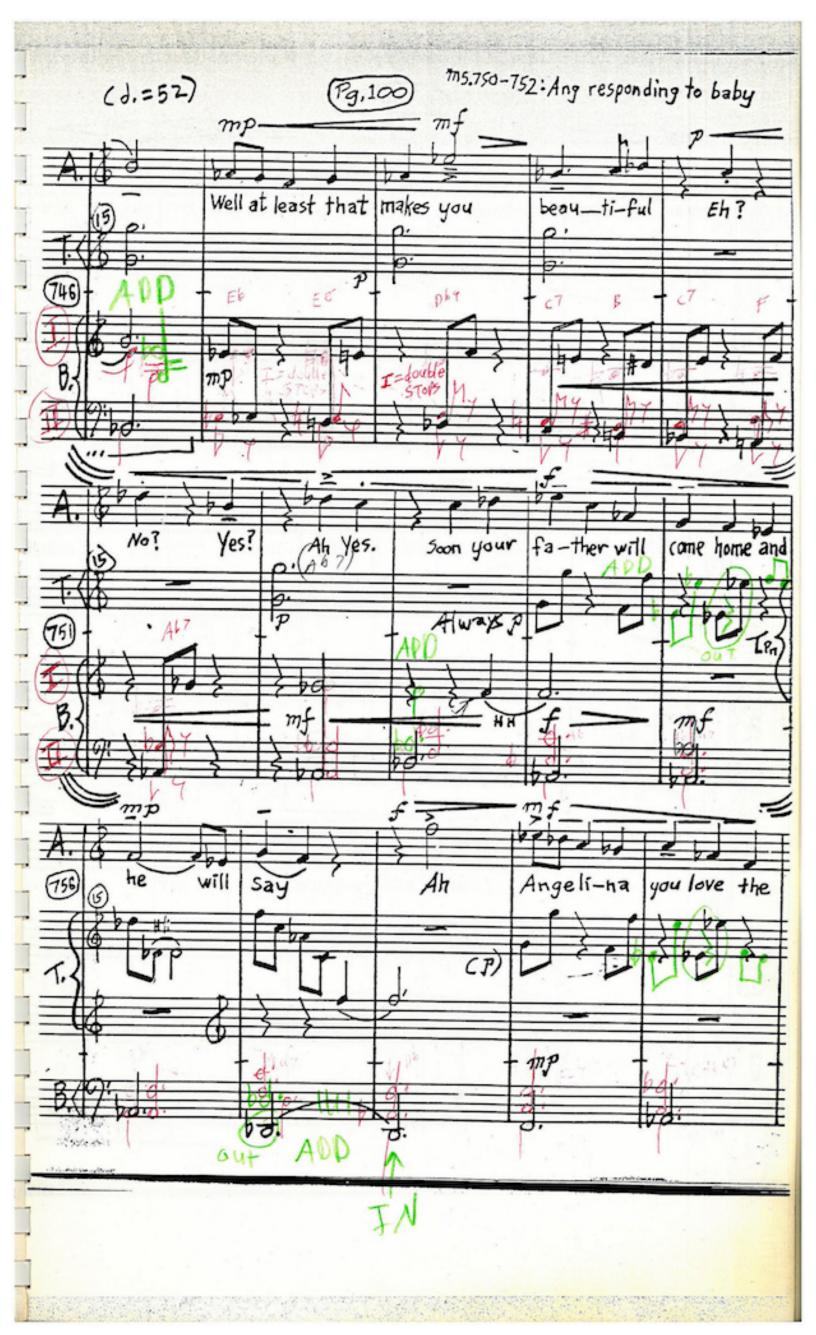




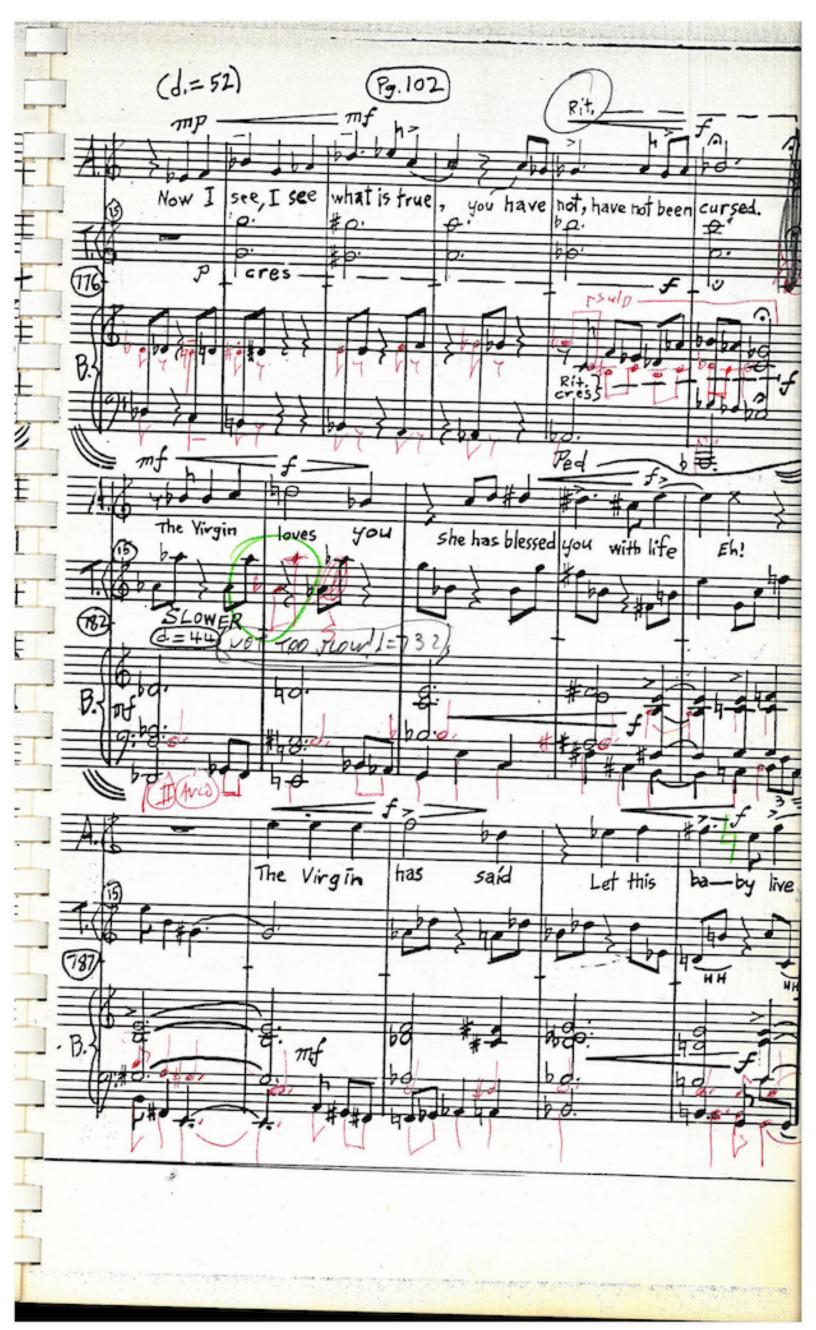


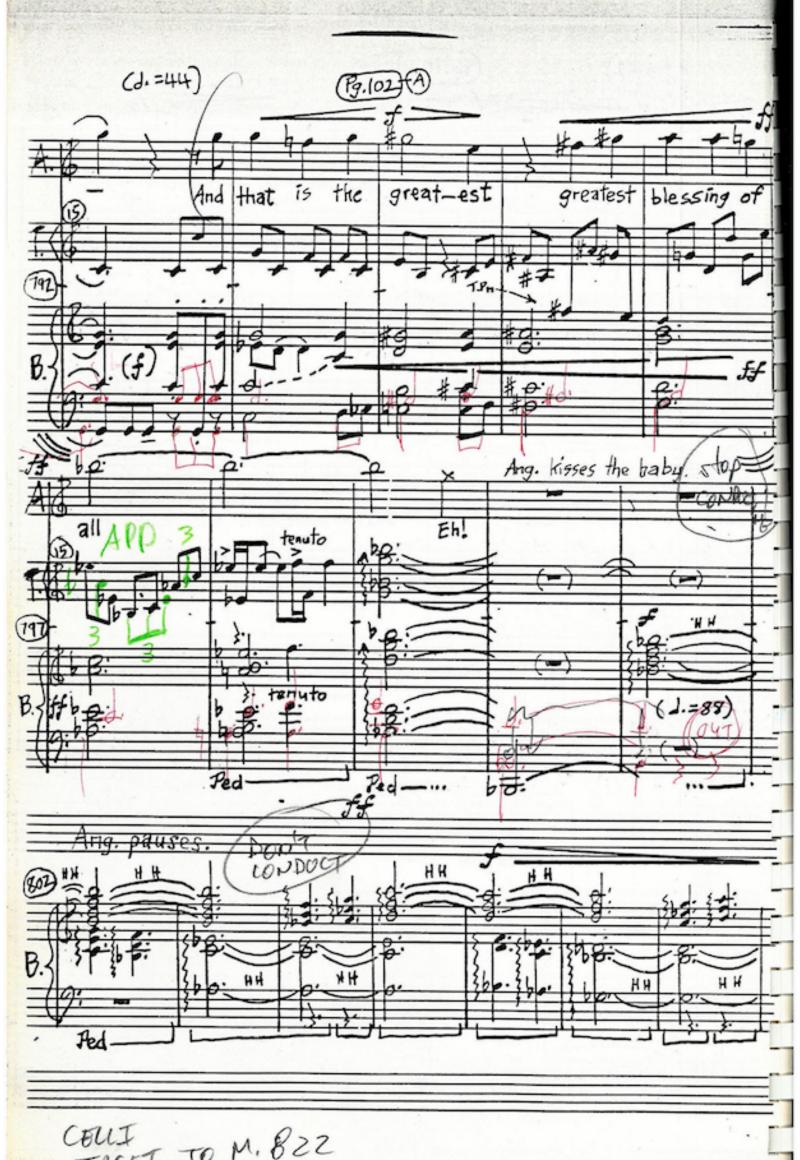




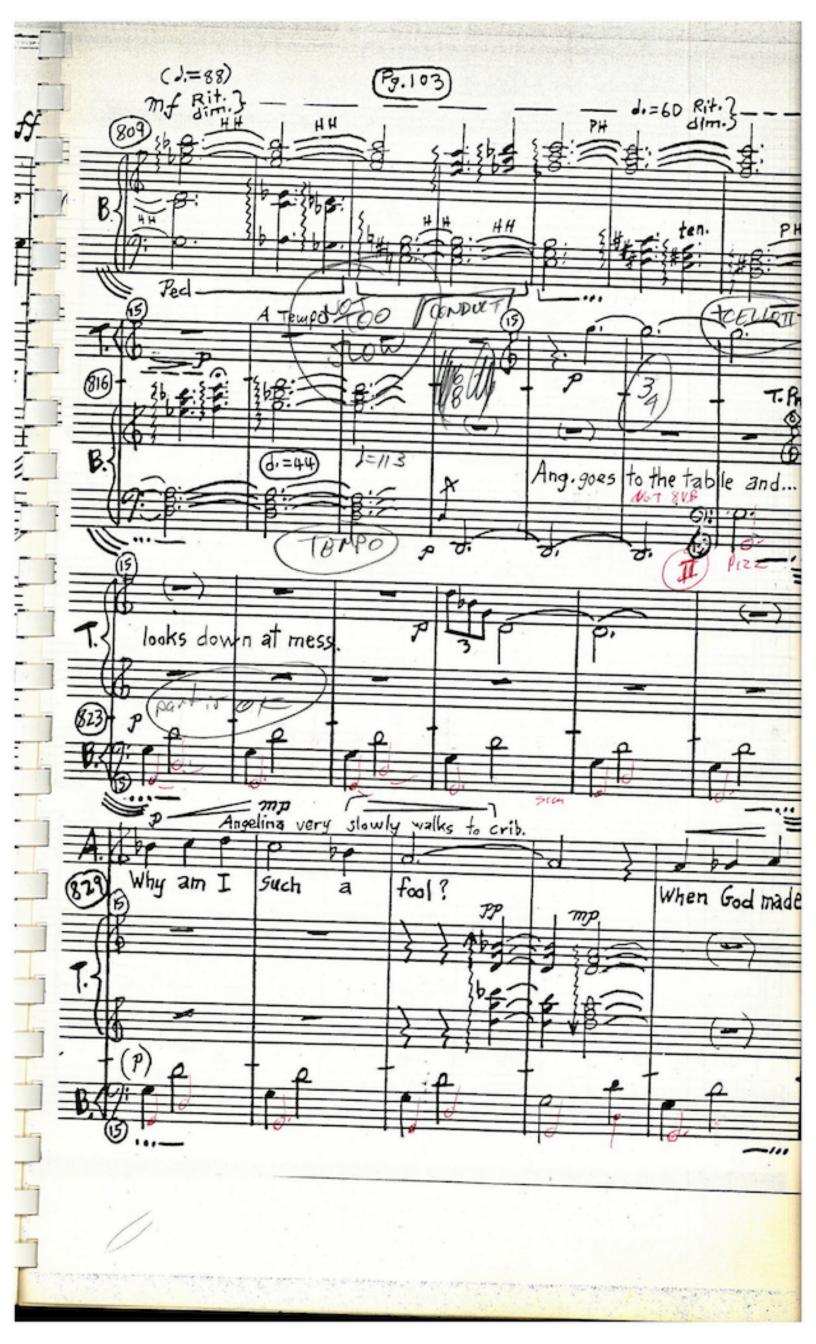




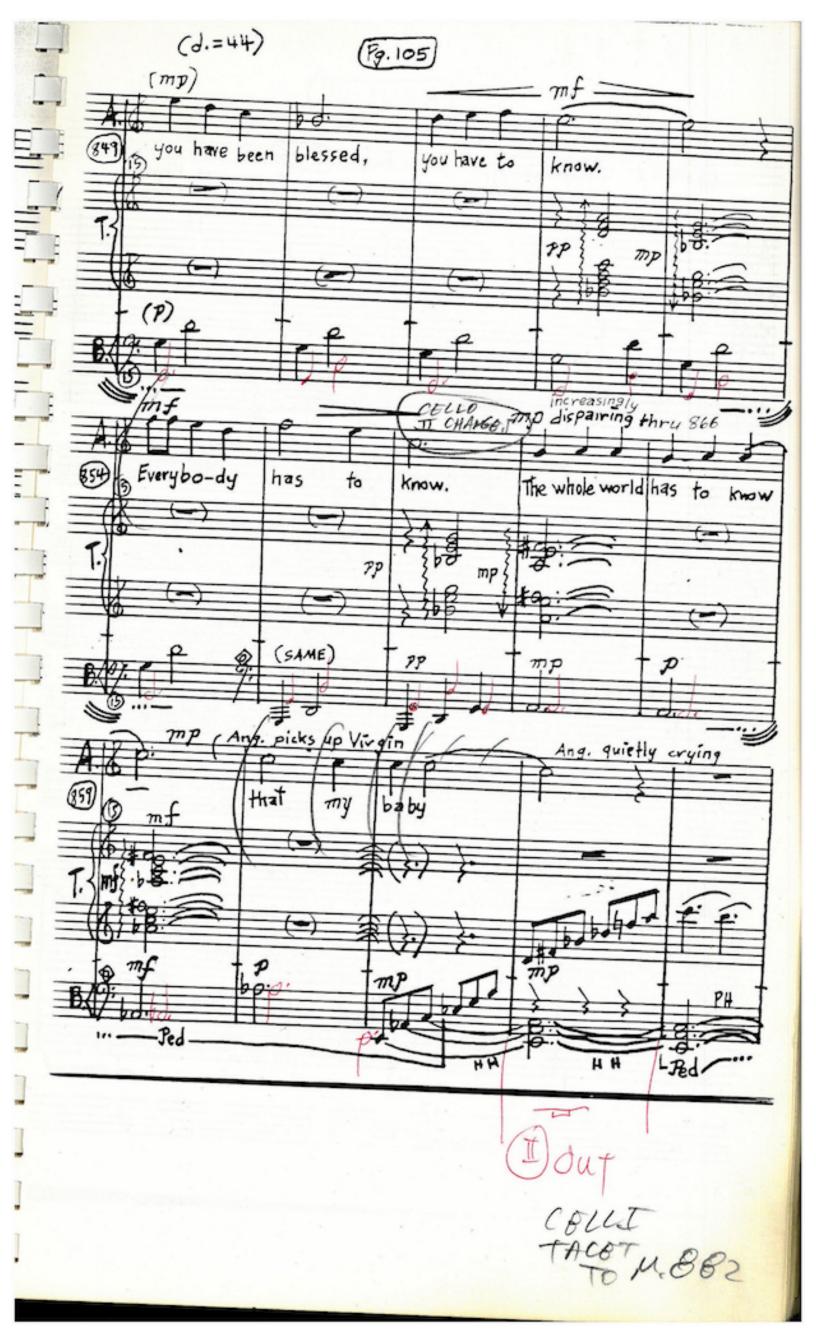




TACET TO M. 822

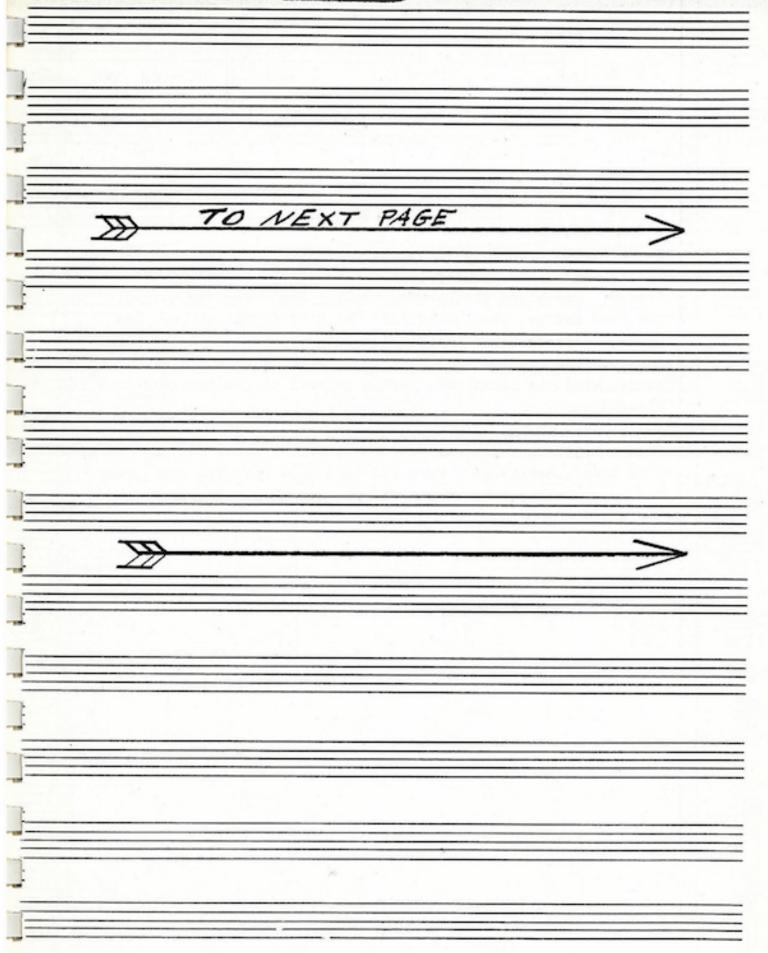








(7)	
170.	106A
61	



THE COLUMN TWO IS NOT THE WAY

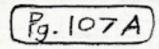
(Pg. 106B) (ms.= measure)

NOTE 4: ms.881-915

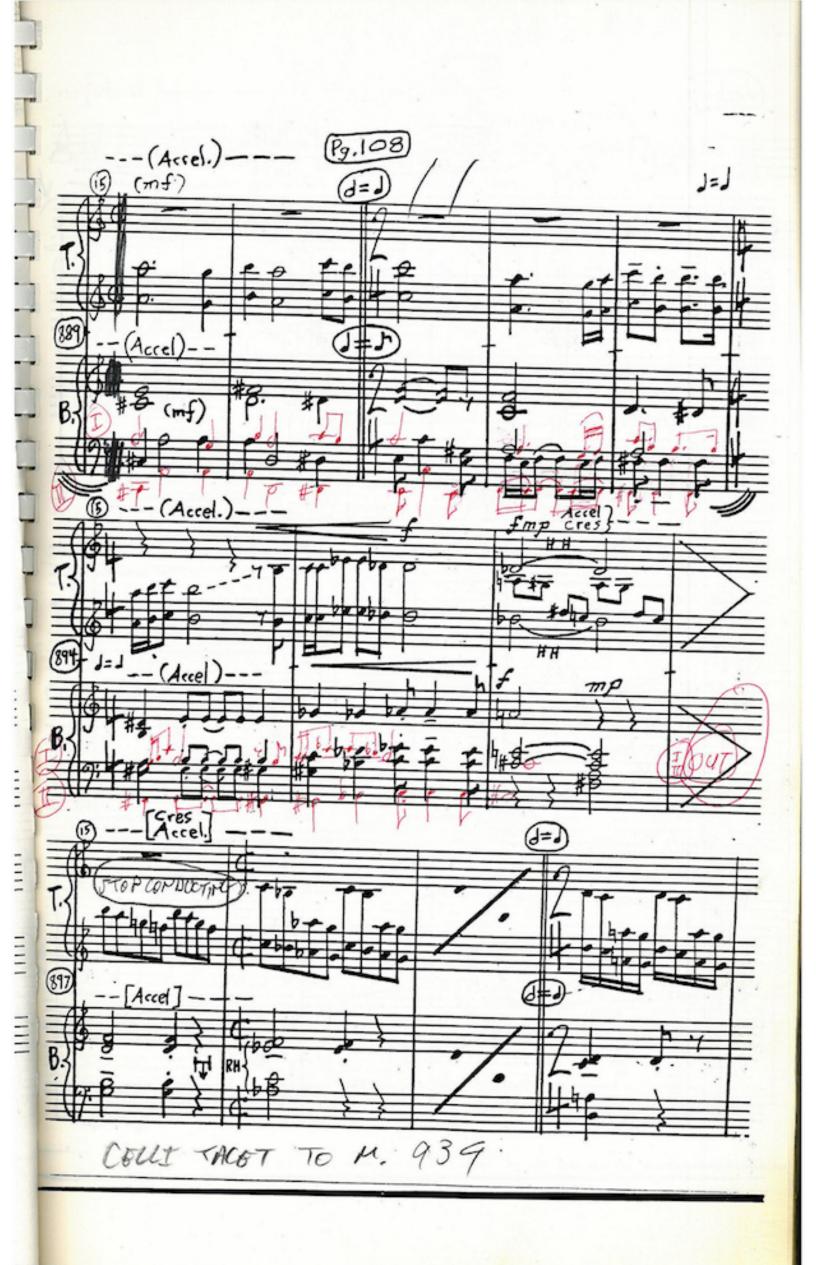
The idea has finally come to the surface. Angelina sets the Virgin down. She quickly puts the candyhammer back in the drawer. She hides the broken rosary. She takes the Virgin, and sets her up, leaning against the back of the niche. She arranges the feet and the fingers and the arm around the Virgin. She puts the candles back in their place. Then she clears the table, with the dishcloth, making certain all the plaster dust is cleared up.

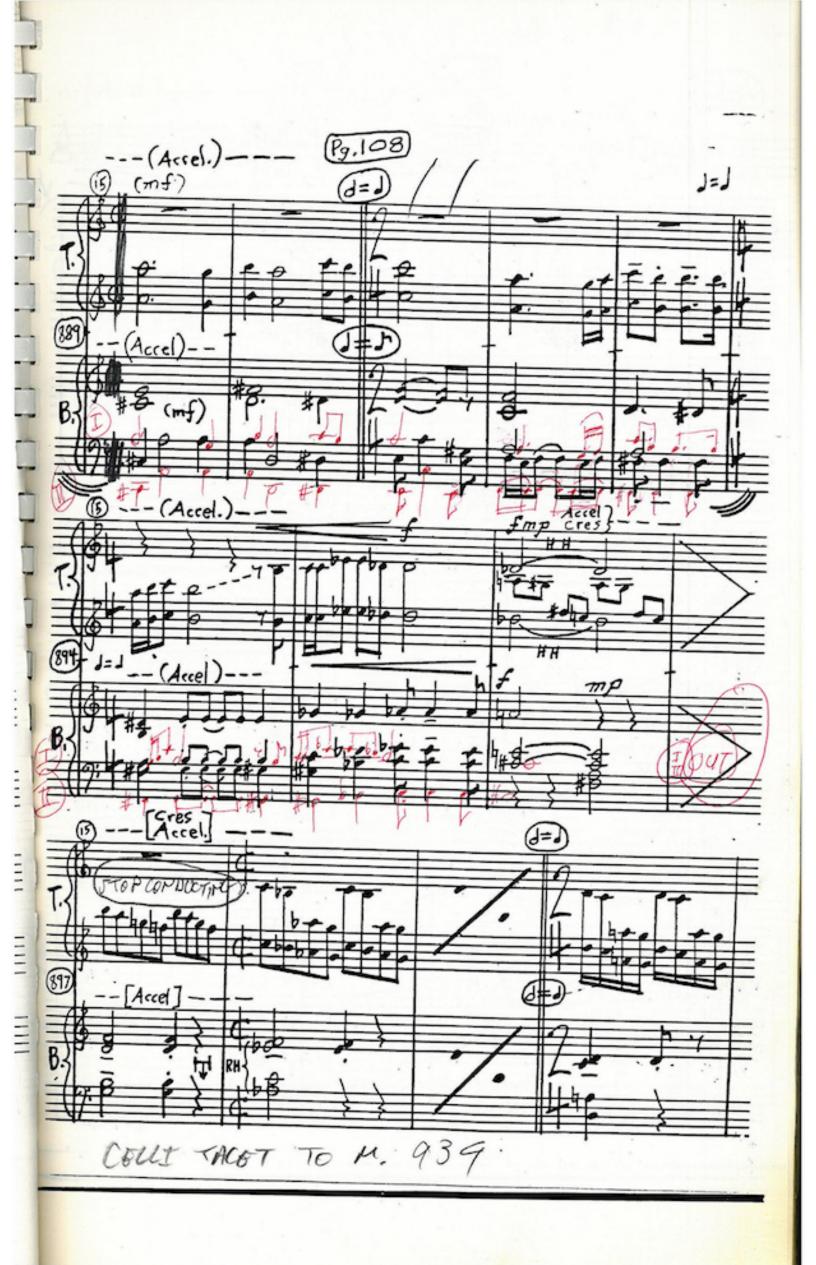
When everything is to her satisfaction, she makes certain she is free from plaster dust, herself. She puts back the dish-towel. She goes to the niche of the Virgin, and crosses herself. 

MOVE METAIC MODUCATION P37
TO 881 (4) 1 TT)

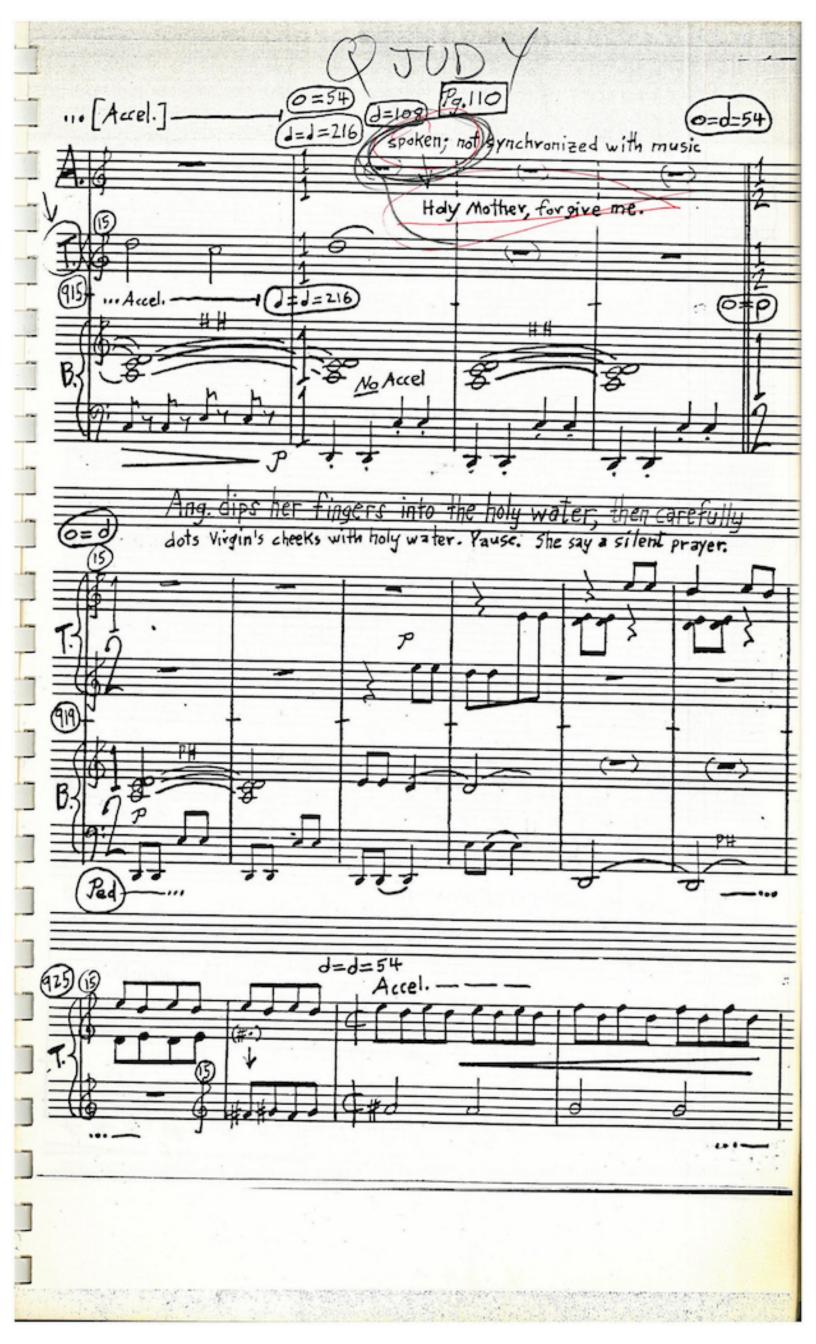


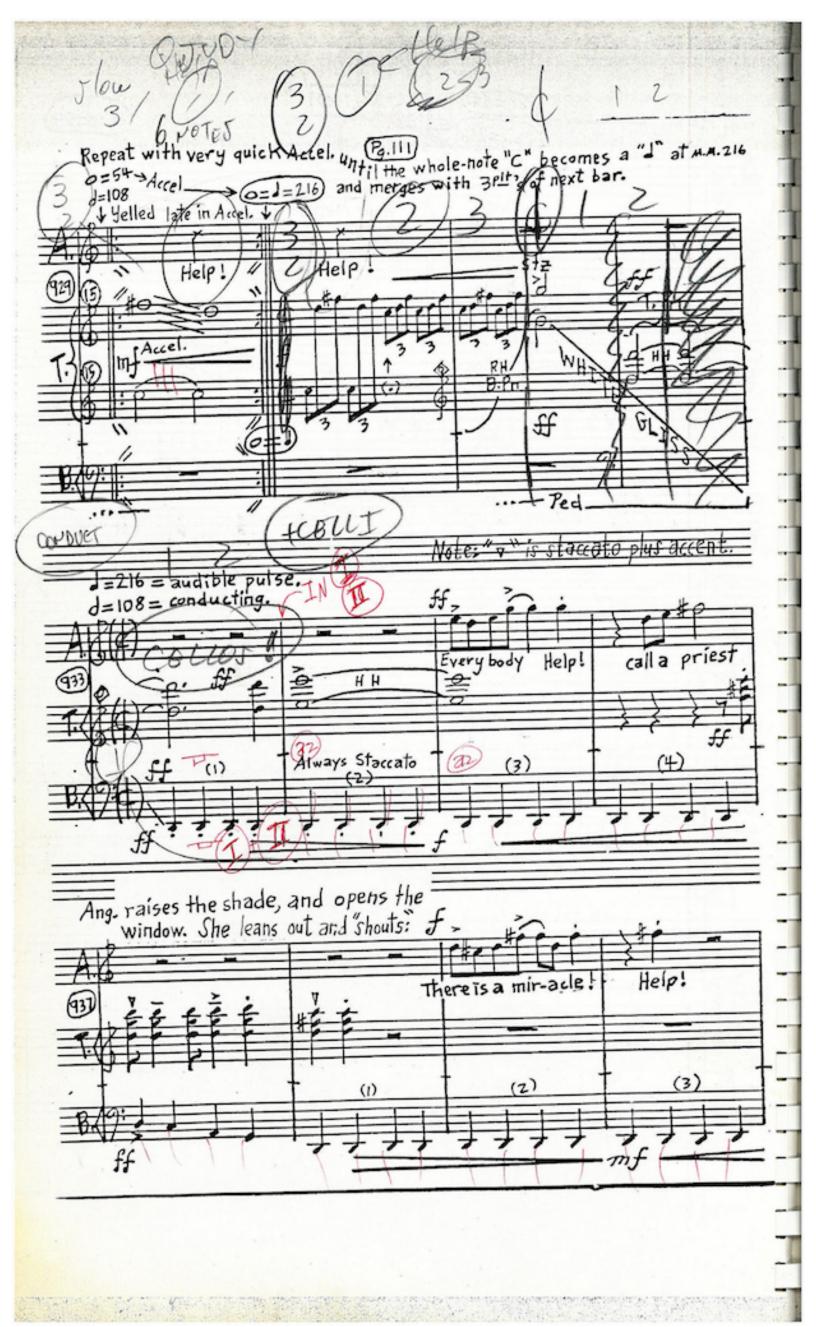








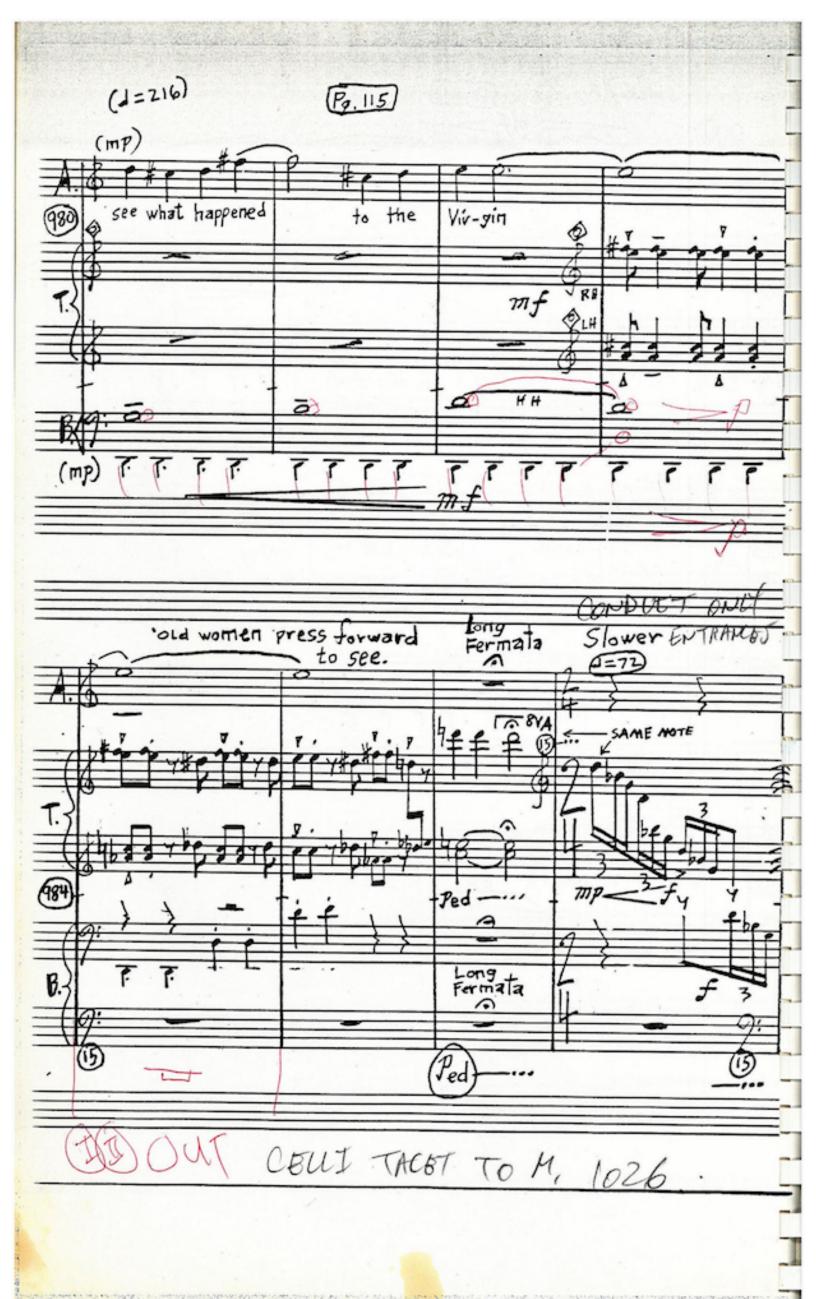










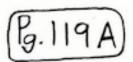










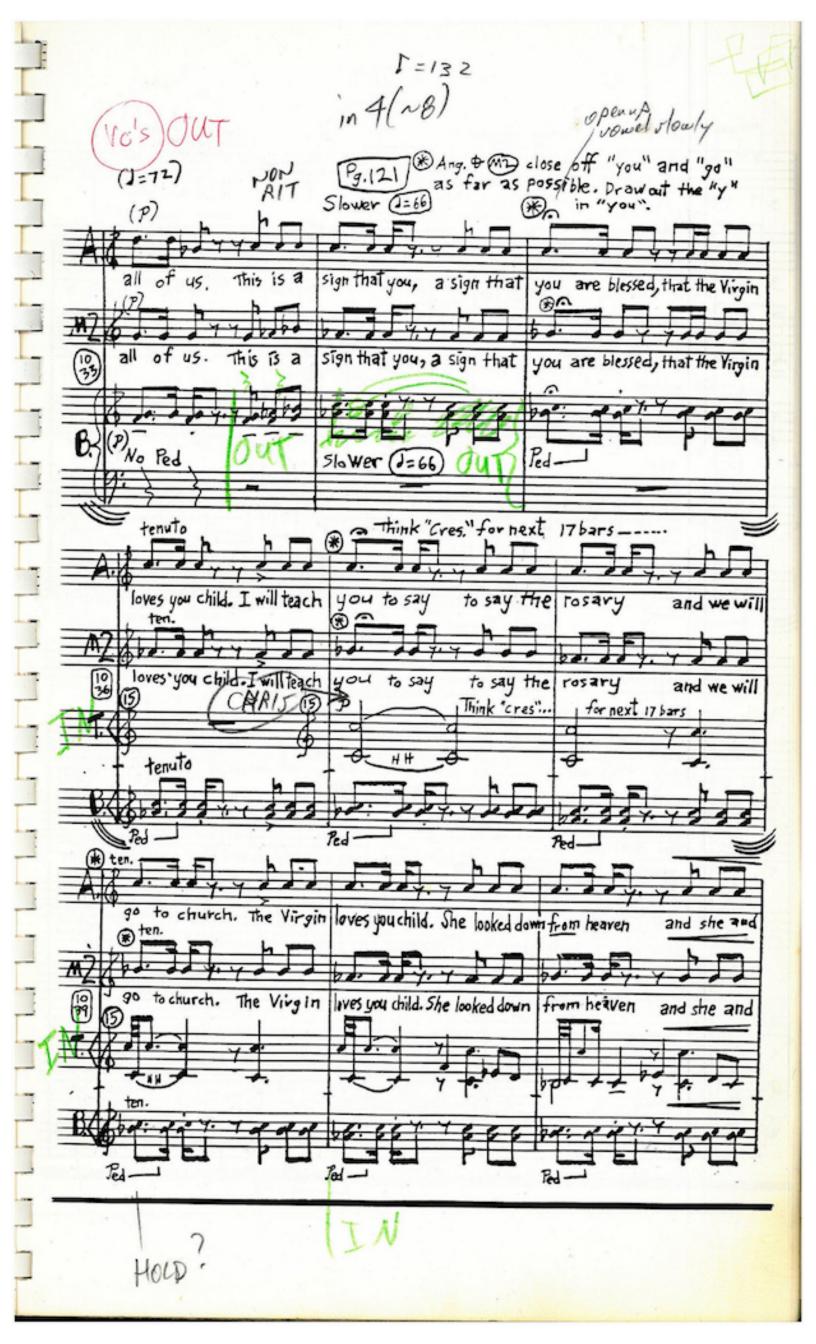


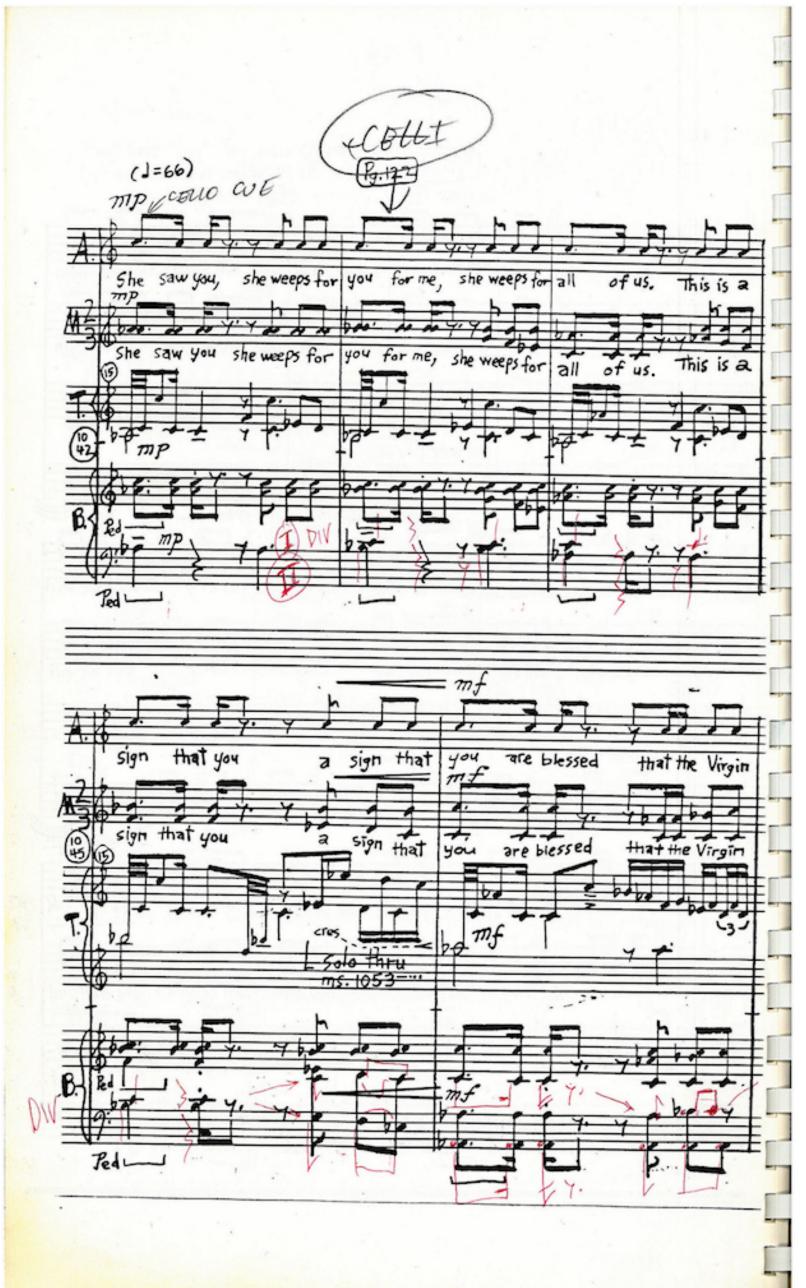
NOTE 5: ms.1021-1024

Before Julia can look, the old women drag her down. Quickly, they whisper to her. Julia bows her head. Now Angelins is complete master of the situation. She goes to the crib, and picks up her baby. She carries her to the niche of the Virgin. The old women are mumbling prayers. Angelins explains to the baby, and also for the benefit of the old women.



TALOT TO M. 1043







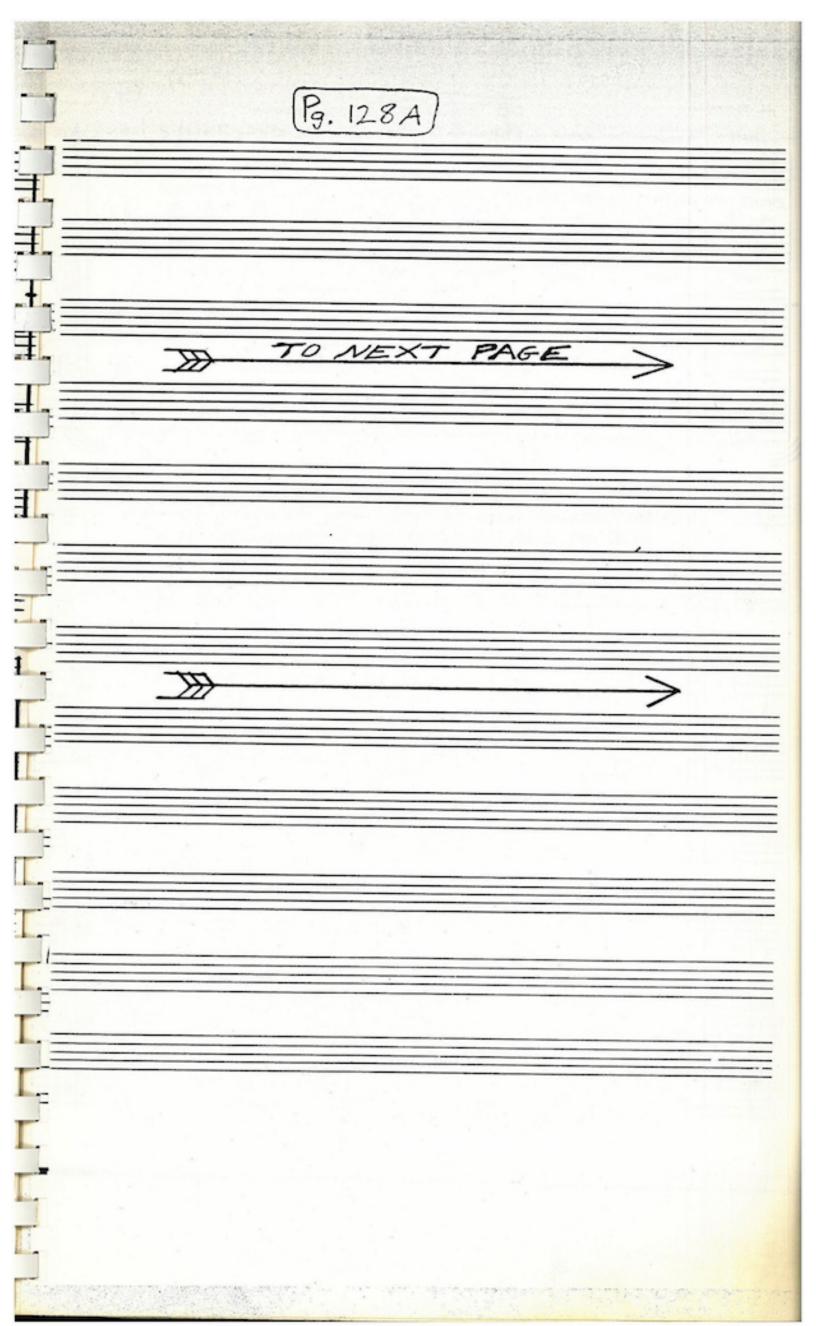










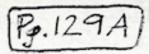


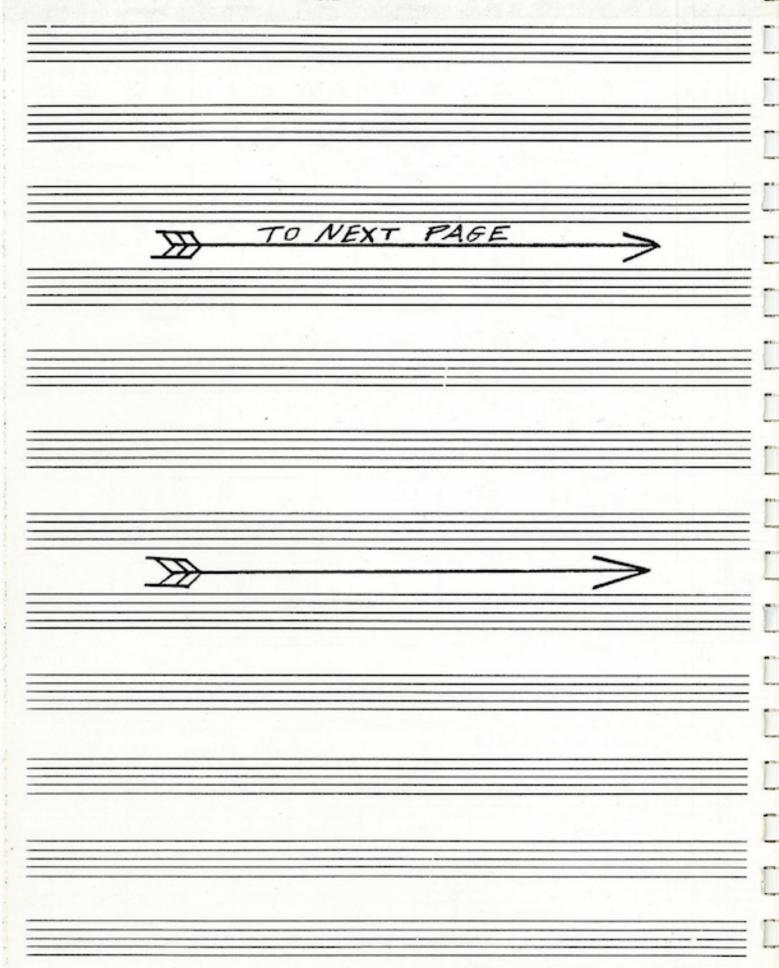
(ms. = measure)

NOTE 6: ms.1098

Angelina turns and faces the women. When she speaks, her voice is strong, and clear. She is issuing a proclamation, not a prayer:

0± C# A# 



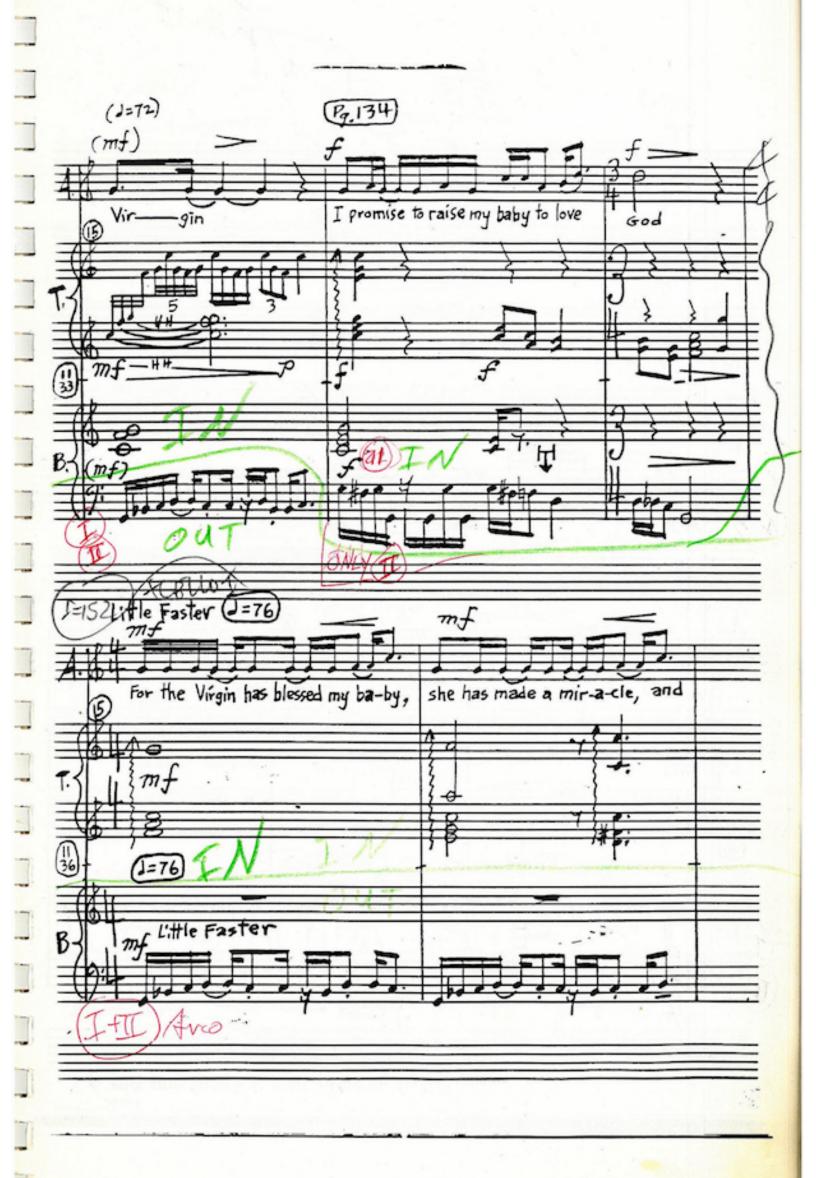






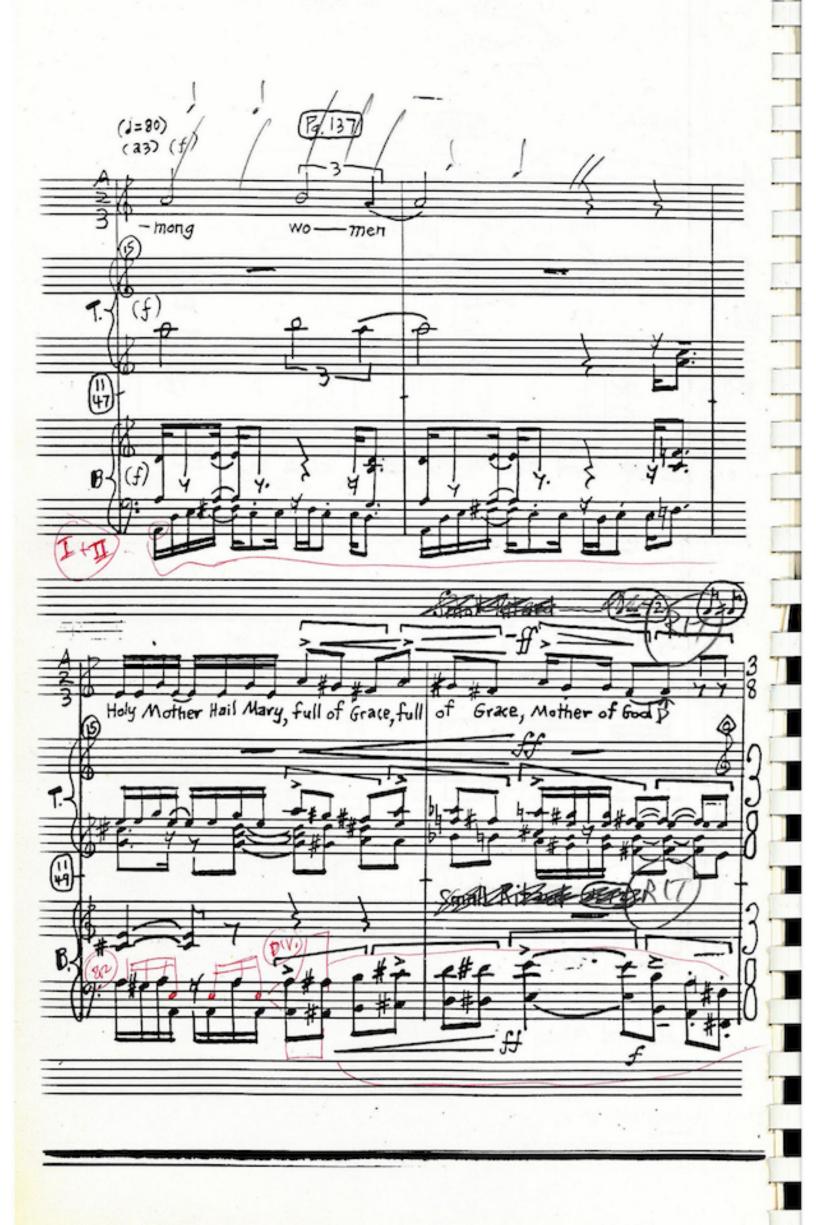


















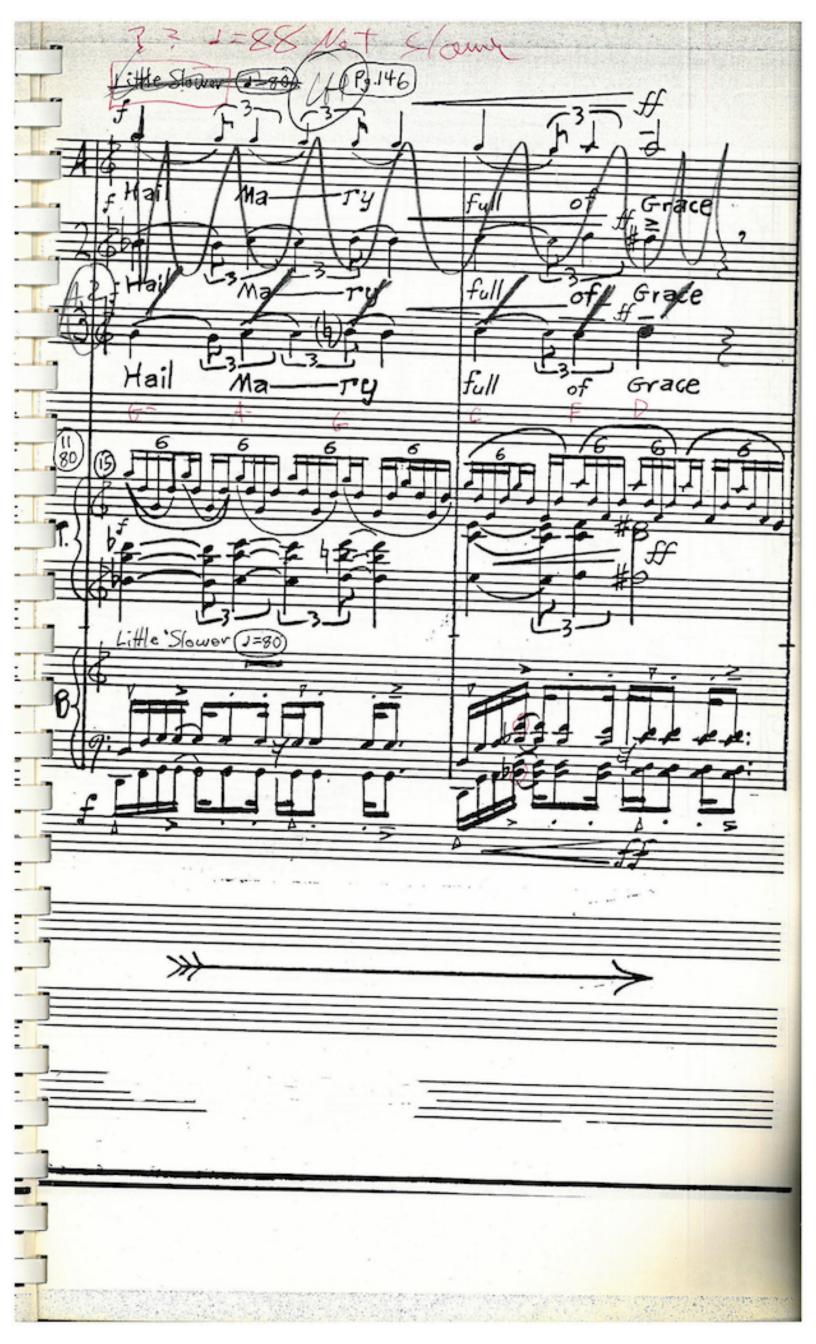








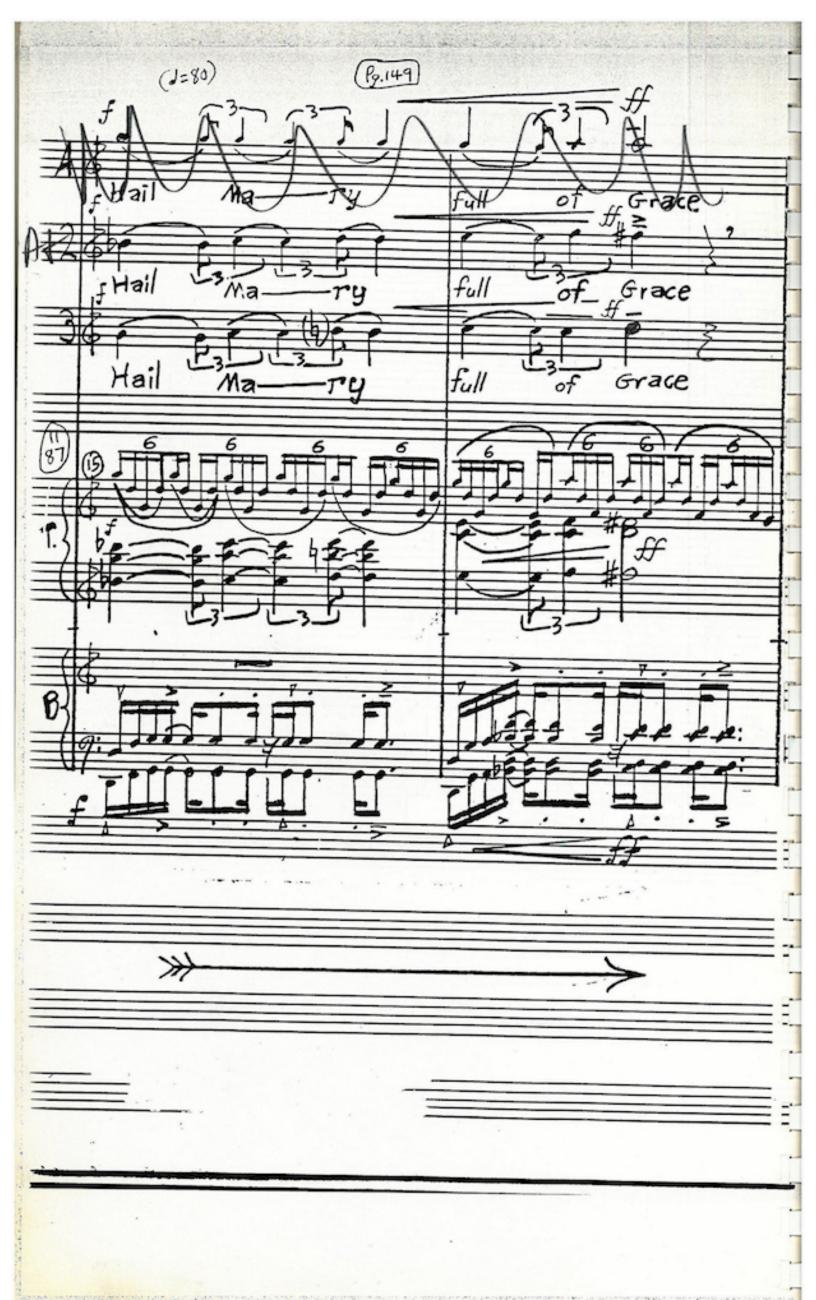








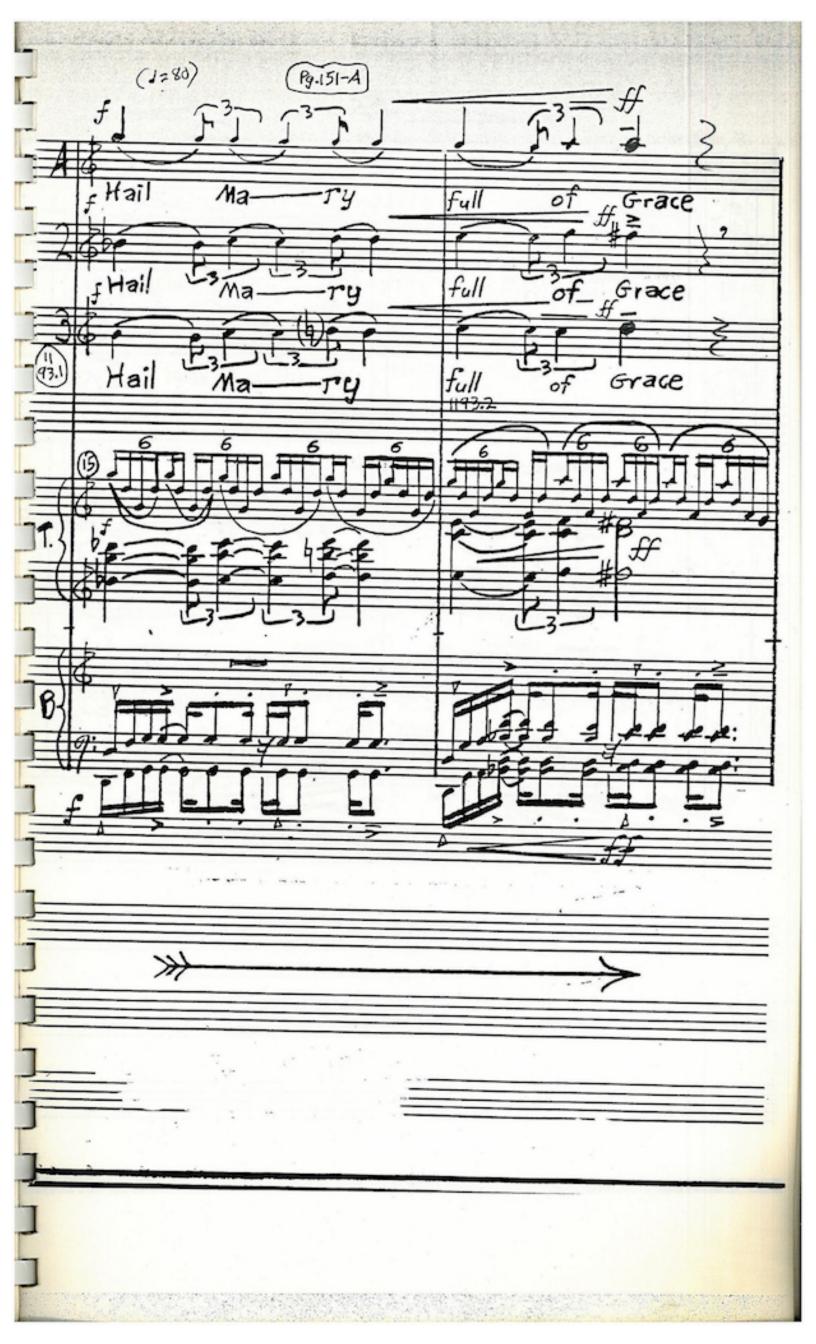
hold down all notes under double slur,







A hold down all notes under double slur.

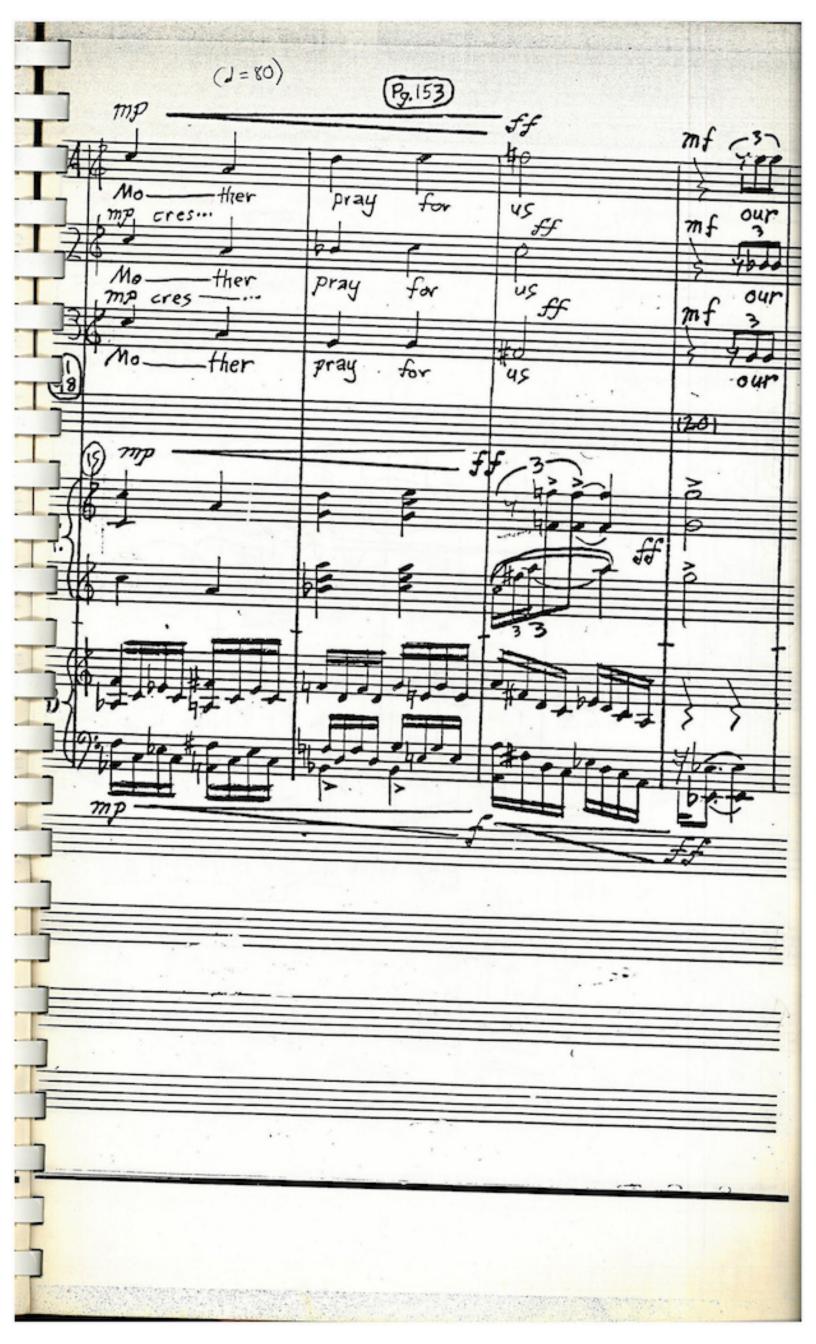






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Mother and Child

Libretto

by Ron Whyte

THE KITCHEN-LIVING ROOM OF A CHEAP TENEMENT APARTMENT, IN A SMALL TOWN IN MONTANA.

THERE IS A SMALL TABLE. IN A NICHE THERE IS A LARGE PLASTER-OF-PARIS VIRGIN MARY. BEFORE HER ARE A FEW SMALL CANDLES IN RED JELLY-GLASSES.

THERE IS A LARGE BABY'S CRIB, WITH A HOOD. IT IS DRAPED WITH FILMY WHITE MATERIAL. DANGLING FROM THE HOOD IS A SMALL TOY BIRD IN BRIGHT PLASTIC COLORS.

FROM A HOOK ON THE WALL DANGLE SEVERAL DIRTY MEN'S OVERALLS. FROM A DIAPER RACK HANG DIAPERS, DRYING.

A CABINET, USED TO STORE SILVERWARE AND SUCH LIKE. SOME CHAIRS, STRAIGHT-BACKED, AND UNCOMFORTABLE.

A WONDOW THAT LOOKS ONTO AN AIR-SHAFT.

(LOCATION OF FIRST APPEARANCE -- APPROX. SCORE PG. NO.:)

AT RISE, A YOUNG ITALIAN GIRL, 16 or 17, SITS A FEW FEET FROM THE CRIB READING A TRUE SCREEN MAGAZINE. SHE PLAYS ROCK AND ROLL MUSIC ON A SMALL TRANSISTOR RADIO.

SOMEONE KICKS AT THE HALL DOOR. AT FIRST, THE GIRL DOESN'T HEAR THE NOISE. DOORBELL RINGS (IN PIANO PART). NOISE CONTINUES. SHE LOOKS UP, GOES TO DOOR, OPENS IT.

(ENTER ANGELINA MELUIZONI, A MATRONLY ITALIAN LADY OF ABOUT 32 OR SO. SHE CARRIES MANY GROCERY BAGS.)

ANGELINA:

No wonder you can't hear, all the noise! Oh, Jesu Maria, those steps'll be my death. Eh, it's so high up here. I should be a bird, and fly up.

(SHE SETS THE PACKAGES DOWN.)

All the noise! How's the baby? Eh, Julia! Turn it off!

(JULIA TURNS OFF THE RADIO.)

Silence is a gift of God! Eh, so I said, while all the noise, the bang, bang, yeh, yeh, yeh, how was the baby?

(ANGELINA GOES TO THE CRIB. LOOKS IN.)

My little "cucua." Not even a sound. Shh. Such a quiet little girl. Look. Look. The bird can fly.

(ANGELINA PLAYS WITH THE TOY BIRD.)

Fly, fly. Ah, she smiles! Look, Julia! Such a happy happy baby. She smiles.

(JULIA HAS PUT ON HER COAT, AND GOTTEN READY TO GO.)

I said, come and look!

(JULIA SHAKES HER HEAD NO.)

Eh, what's this "no." Come, Look at the baby.

(JULIA SHAKES HER HEAD NO, AND LOOKS A BIT FRIGHTENED.)

~

2

4

ANGELINA (CONTINUED):

No, no. Not you, too, Julia! You're a young girl. You don't believe what the old women say. Come. Come.

7 (ANGELINA GOES TO JULIA, AND TAKES HER BY THE ARM.)

You are the only one that will sit with the baby when I have to go out. If you can do that, why can't you look at her? Come, Come.

(JULIA BREAKS AWAY. ANGELINA TRIES TO PULL HER TOWARD THE CRIB. JULIA BREAKS AWAY.)

Ah, no, no. There's no such thing as the evil eye. That's something they believe in Sicily. You're from the North, from Lucca. Evil eye! This is America! Italian we are, but also Americans! Come.

(JULIA WON'T MOVE.)

All right, then get out!

(VOICES IN COUNTERPOINT)

(AS:)

No evil eye! It is not a curse! Julia, it is not God that has cursed my baby!

(END COUNTERPOINT)

10B- Eh, what is the use of talking to you? Out! I said out!
11 Get out of my house!

(ANGELINA GRABS THE NEAREST OBJECT, WHICH HAPPENS TO BE THE TINY TRANSISTOR RADIO. AND THREATENS TO THROW IT AT JULIA. JULIA WANTS TO RUN AWAY, BUT SHE ALSO WANTS HER RADIO.)

So, what are you waiting?

(JULIA INDICATES THE RADIO. ANGELINA LOOKS AT IT. REALIZES THAT IT IS JULIA'S. SHE HOLDS IT OUT. JULIA CAUTIOUSLY REACHES FOR IT. GRABS IT, AND RUNS OUT THE DOOR. SHE SLAMS IT BEHIND HER. MUSIC REPEATS TILL DOOR SLAM. PAUSE. ANGELINA MAKES A FACE, THEN MAKES AN OBSCENE GESTURE AT THE DOOR. SHE GOES TO THE CRIB, LEANS INTO IT, AND KISSES THE BABY.

(SHE STANDS UP. PAUSE. SHE THINKS, MAKING A FROWNING FACE. SHE SHRUGS. SHE MAKES THE SAME OBSCENE GESTURE AT THE DOOR. SHE GOES TO HER GROCERY BAGS, AND BEGINS TO UNPACK ONE. BUT SHE IS DISTURBED. AN IDEA IS FORMING, DEEP IN HER MIND. SHE GLANCES AT THE CRIB. SHE THINKS. SHE GOES TO THE WINDOW AND DRAWS THE SHADE. SHE IS UP TO SOMETHING, THAT IS OBVIOUS.

SHE CAREFULLY CLEARS OFF THE TABLE, THEN WIPES HER HAND ACROSS IT, MAKING CERTAIN IT IS CLEAN. IT ISN'T. SHE WIPES IT WITH A DISH TOWEL. THERE. NOW IT IS CLEAN.

SHE GOES TO THE STATUE OF THE VIRGIN. SHE CROSSES HERSELF, AFTER DIPPING HER HAND INTO A LITTLE BOWL OF HOLY WATER. SHE CAREFULLY TAKES THE CANDLES TO THE TABLE. THEN SHE BRINGS THE VIRGIN TO THE TABLE, AND SETS HER DOWN.

ANGELINA CROSSES HERSELF AGAIN. SHE IS ABOUT TO SPEAK: SHE STOPS HERSELF, GETS A LARGE KITCHEN MATCH, STRIKES IT ON THE BOX, AND LIGHTS A CANDLE.

11A-12

SCORE Pg.160 PG. NO.: (ROLL PIANO CHORD AS LIGHT FROM THE CANDLE 13 COMES UP. NOW ANGELINA CAN SPEAK OPENLY TO THE VIRGIN.) ANGELINA: Holy Mother. (ANGELINA CROSSES HERSELF AGAIN.) When I was a girl, my mother told me, "Angelina, when you have a problem, go to the Virgin. Don't ask a priest. Go to the Virgin. She will help you." 14 (VOICES IN COUNTERPOINT) (AS:) ANGELINA: So I have come to you. You know everything. I know that. What happens without God's hand in it somewhere? But still I will explain to 15 you. Maybe you have been too busy somewhere, or listening to someone else. How do I know. So I will tell you everything. My husband is a good man. You know that. We came here, to America, from Lucca, together. He works at 16 the copper smelter, up on the hill. He runs a crane. It is not such good money, but for us it will do. We live 17 here, and it is not bad. I am not complaining. (SUDDENLY SHE IS MAD AT HERSELF.) Eh! Why do I explain everything? I should not waste your time! Forgive me! 18 (SHE CROSSES HERSELF, AND LIGHTS ANOTHER CANDLE.) MOTHER 3: I love my husband. MOTHER 2: My husband loves me. ANGELINA: He works hard. MOTHER 3: Look how dirty his overalls get. MOTHER 2: He is a good man. That's what I wanted to tell you. MOTHER: 3: What a good man he is. MOTHER 2: 19 He's never hurt anyone in his life. MOTHER 3: What a good man he is.

ANGELINA:

He's never hurt anyone in his life. 19

MOTHER 3:

What a good man he is.

MOTHER 2:

He's never hurt anyone in his life.

ANGELINA:

Anyway! We wanted a baby, I mean, I am not too young 20

anymore, but we wanted a baby, so we went to a doctor 21

here, in town, and he put me on a. . . schedule . . . and he gave me some talk. . . how you say, advice. So I was going to have a baby! Doesn't every good Catholic 22 woman want a, want a baby!

ANGELINA, MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

Want a, want a, want a - - - . Beautiful soul to raise and teach and give to you - - . Beautiful soul to raise and teach and give to you - - . So I am having a baby. 23

But I'm nervous. 24

ANGELINA:

The fault is my own, I tell myself. Maybe I'm too old to have a baby.

(VOICES IN COUNTERPOINT)

(AS:)

ANGELINA:

Maybe not. I am afraid. I pray to you all the time. But you do not, do not hear me. I go to the hospital. 25

MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

Such a healthy, healthy baby.

ANGELINA:

I go to the hospital.

MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

Such a healthy, healthy baby.

ANGELINA:

It's a girl!

MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

Such a healthy, healthy baby.

ANGELINA:

A girl five pounds. A girl five pounds. A girl five pounds. 26 A girl five pounds.

(MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3 WHISPER RAPIDLY) 27

ANGELINA:

A girl five pounds.

(WHISPERING STOPS)

ANGELINA (SPOKEN):

Such a healthy baby girl.

28

(PAUSE)

But you see. But you see

29

ANGELINA (SINGS):

No legs.

MOTHER 3: (SINGS):

You see her in the cradle; but you see

ANGELINA AND MOTHER 2:

No, no legs, little bumps.

MOTHER 3:

Arms, yes; little strong arms; but you see

30

ANGELINA AND MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

No, no fingers on the ends.

MOTHER 3:

What can she do with those?

MOTHER 2:

I hold the bottle for her so she can eat.

31

ANGELINA:

But she is a beautiful baby.

MOTHER 3:

I do not say she is unhappy.

MOTHER 2:

Because she laughs.

ANGELINA:

Because she laughs. Because -- she smiles at me. It is my fault she is this way but, she smiles anyway. She doesn't know she is this way but, she smiles anyway. She doesn't know about herself yet. That's the trouble. That's what is wrong.

ANGELINA, MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

Some day she will know

MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

And she will hate me, hate me - - - .

ANGELINA:

(FACING CRIB: BACK TO AUDIENCE)

No legs.

34

(PAUSE.)

(ANGRY, RESTRAINED:)

The old women in this building, we are all Italian.

34

(VOICES IN COUNTERPOINT)

(AS:)

ANGELINA:

These old women, they say this is a curse on me. They tell their children my baby has the evil eye. You saw how Julia acted just now,

ANGELINA, MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

Just now. It will get worse.

(THE THREE WOMEN SEPARATE TO DIFFERENT AREAS ON STAGE.)

MOTHER 3 (AS IN PRAYER):

38	NACET TAXA	MOTHER 2:
39	ANGELINA:	(IN DESPAIR,
	(IN ANGER, CHOPPY):	SOSTENUTO):
		Even the men,
40	Even the men	the men at
	at the smelter,	the smelter,
	they say to my	
	husband, eh,	my husband,
	they say	eh, they say
41	things. How	things. How
	can I raise	can I raise
	my little	my little
	girl. Every-	girl. Every-
42	body tells	body tells
	her you have	her you have
	the evil eye.	the evil eye.
	How can I make	
	her happy	
42	then?	
43	(DAG CDDD AMDD)	
	(EXASPERATED):	
	I will not	
	always be	
	arnajo se	

there!

Even the men at the smelter, they say to my husband, eh! They say things. How can I raise my little girl. Everybody tells her you have the evil eye. How can I make her happy then? I will not always be there to hold her in my arms and tell her she is beautiful. When she grows up she will be so unhappy, twelve times worse than an old maid. Her heart will turn to vinegar and she will hate, she will become filled with hate. Even the men at the smelter they say to my husband, eh, they say things. How can I raise my little girl? How can I raise my little girl? Everybody tells her, little girl; everybody tells her you have the evil eye. How can I make her happy then? I will not always be there to hold her in my arms and -

(ANGELINA GOES TO MOTHER 3 AND TRIES TO GET MOTHER 3 ANGRY)

ANGELINA (ANGRY):

44 To hold her in my arms and tell her.

MOTHER 3:

(STARTS ANGRY; REVERTS TO PRAYING):

To hold her in my arms and tell her she is beautiful; when she grows up no man will have her.

ANGELINA (ANGRY):

When she grows up no man will have her.

MOTHER 3:

(STARTS ANGRY; REVERTS TO PRAYING):

When she grows up no man will have her; she will be so unhappy, twelve times worse than an old maid. . .

(MOTHER 3 CONTINUES PRAYING)

(AS):

(ANGELINA GETS EXASPERATED AND RUNS OVER TO MOTHER 2 AND TRIES TO GET HER ANGRY):

ANGELINA (ANGRY):

No man will have her; she will be so, be so unhappy!

46

MOTHER 2:

(STARTS ANGRY; REVERTS TO DESPAIR):

No man will have her, she will be so, be so unhappy, twelve times worse than an old maid.

ANGELINA (ANGRY):

Her heart will turn to vinegar.

47

MOTHER 2:

(STARTS ANGRY; REVERTS TO DESPAIR):

Her heart will turn to, turn to vinegar and she will hate.

ANGELINA:

(ANGRY):

And she;

(A LITTLE DESPAIRING, LANGUID):

Will hate;

48

(LESS ANGRY):

She will;

(MORE LANGUID):

Become;

(HARDLY ANGRY):

Filled with;

(VERY LANGUID):

Filled with hate, filled with hate. What kind of soul is that to give you then? The doctor says to me, he says:

49

MOTHER 3 (AS DOCTOR):

Often times it happens that these babies die.

ANGELINA:

How? I ask him how is that possible? He says:

50

51

MOTHER 3 (AS DOCTOR):

They twist in their sleep, they turn on their faces and they choke because they cannot turn over.

ANGELINA:

When he said that I thought it would be good. Forgive me, but in my heart I thought it would be, it would be good.

(PAUSE.)

SCORE PG. NO:

> MOTHER 2: (IN PRAYER):

52 ANGELINA (IN DESPAIR):

You would rejoice with her baby's soul; but how can I take; can I take a life? But how 53 a life? can I take a life?

If she came to you now her soul would be clean and white. You would rejoice with her baby's soul, but how can I take a life. There is no way without committing a mortal sin. If she came to you now her soul would be clean and white. You would rejoice with her baby's

MOTHER 3

(IN ANGER, CHOPPY)

There is no way without committing morta1 sin!

(PAUSE.)

soul.

(IN PRAYER):

54 To even wish the thing is more a sin than doing it; so what can I do? If she grows up her soul will come to you unclean and that is even worse. To even wish the thing is more a sin than doing it, so what can I do? If 55 she grows up her

(IN DESPAIR):

(IN ANGER, CHOPPY): If she grows up her soul will come

to you unclean and that is even, even worse.

So what can I do? she grows up, her soul will come to you unclean.

(STARTING IN PRAYE

And so I ask you for an answer; if

you say give back

the child to me,

then I will give

her to you.

(PAUSE.)

56 (STARTING IN DESPAIR):

soul will come to

you unclean.

If you say give back the child to me,

ANGELINA:

MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

If you say,

Give back the child,

If you say,

Then!

If you say!

I will!

Give back the child!

Then I!

Give back the child!

57

		PG. N
	(ALL THREE VOICES IN CANON; ORDER: ANGELINA, MOTHER 2, MOTHER 3):	
Then I will		
	(PAUSE.)	
	(SAME ORDER; ALL THREE IN CANON):	
Then I will you now	give her to you now. Then I will give her to	58
	(ANGELINA LIGHTS ANOTHER CANDLE, AND WAITS, WITH BOWED HEAD HOLDING HER ROSARY, SHE LOOKS UP AT THE VIRGIN):	
	(SAME ORDER; THREE-PART CANON; A CAPPELLA):	
	nswer. Nothing no sign. Are you listening?	60
	you; say yes or no! Give me a sign. You are attention to me! Why do you not listen!	61
	(ANGELINA GOES TO A CABINET, AND TAKES, FROM A DRAWER, A SMALL CANDY-HAMMER.)	
	(CANON CONTINUES):	
this hammer.	g to you. I will make you listen. Look, I have I will make, make you pay attention to me, o me, attention to me!	62
	(END A CAPPELLA. PAUSE.)	
	(THEN ALL ANGER DISAPPEARING, ANGELINA SINGS QUIETLY AND SADLY):	
	ANGELINA:	
Please give	me a sign.	
	(PAUSE.)	
Or I will hu	art you.	64
	(ANGELINA CAREFULLY, ONE BY ONE, BREAKS OFF THE FINGERS OF THE VIRGIN.)	
	(FIRST INDETERMINATE PITCH IN PIANO.)	
	ANGELINA:	

How will you raise the sick,

65

MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

Without your fingers?

(ANGELINA BREAKS OFF HANDS.)

ANGELINA:

How will you bless the world,

66

MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

Without your hands?

(ANGELINA BREAKS OFF AN ARM.)

ANGELINA:

How will you embrace your son,

SCORE PG. NO:

MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

Without an arm? 67

ANGELINA, MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

- How will you help the world? Where is the sign - -? 68 (PAUSE.)
- You shall not stand beneath his cross and weep. Your toes 69 will go.

(ANGELINA BREAKS OFF TOES.)

Your feet.

(ANGELINA BREAKS OFF FEET.)

You will - - - fall down. And still you smile - - - . 71 (PAUSE.)

ANGELINA:

- Your cheeks are red. Your eyes are blue, and look at me. Without an eye, what will you see? 72
- (ANGELINA LAYS THE STATUE DOWN ON THE TABLE AND CAREFULLY DESTROYS AN EYE.) 73

(IN THE FOLLOWING, ANGELINA BECOMES MORE AND MORE CRUEL AND HYSTERICAL):

I leave you one - - - .

(FRANKLY):

I am not that evil.

(SARCASTICALLY):

74 Ha!

(FRANKLY):

And your gold crown - - . How will anyone know that you are the Virgin, ha! ha! Without your crown - - - . ha! ha! Ha! ha! They; will not; ha, ha; they will not; hey will not know - - . They will not know; no, no; they will; they will not know. They will not know - - - . 75

(ANGELINA KNOCKS CROWN OFF VIRGIN.) 76 (PAUSE.)

Now you are human. Worse than human; worse than human, 77 crippled.

MOTHER 2 (WHISPERING):

Worse than human crippled.

ANGELINA (SINGS):

And where is the sign?

MOTHER 2 (WHISPERING):

And where is the sign?

ANGELINA:

(ANGRILY	PRAYING	AS	SHE	BREAKS	THE	ROSARY):

I break the rosary so that people will forget how to pray. 78

(ANGELINA OCCASIONALLY SMASHES ROSARY BEADS; WHISPERING EXCITES HER TO SMASH MORE BEADS WITH THE CANDY-HAMMER.)

MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

(WHISPERING IN COUNTERPOINT):

Forget how to pray; forget; forget; forget how to pray; how to pray; forget, forget

(PAUSE.)

MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3: (WHISPERING):	
	79 80
	81
If there was a god; if there was a god; if there	82
	<pre>(WHISPERING): my mother, my mother lied to me; my mother lied to me; lied to me; my mother</pre> <pre>If there was a god; if</pre>

(SMASHES BEAD, THEN)

(PAUSE:)

me ----.

ANGELINA, MOTHER 2 & MOTHER 3 (SING):

Where There	is the sign. There is no god. Where is the sign. is no god	83 85
	(MOTHER 2 EXITS TO SING BACK STAGE. MOTHER 3 MOVES INTO SHADOWS TO WHISPER. ANGELINA, LOOKING EXHAUSTED, SITS SILENTLY IN A CHAIR FACING AUDIENCE WITH HEAD	86
	BENT OVER; AUDIENCE CANNOT SEE HER FACE. LIGHTS VERY SLOWLY FADE OUT EXCEPT FOR OVERHEAD SPOT ON ANGELINA. AS MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3 BUILD TENSION,	
	ANGELINA OCCASIONALLY TWITCHES OR JERKS. MOTHER 2	

AND MOTHER 3 ARE VOICES WITHIN ANGELINA.)

MOTHER 2 (SINGS): (FROM BACKSTAGE):	MOTHER 3 (WHISPERING):	
(FROM BACKSTAGE).	There is no god or he would	87
	have sent a sign through you. The Holy Mother is made out of, made out of	-
	plaster and paint.	88
When she grows up no man will have her	My mother lied to me. She said that She said that you would send a sign. If there was a god, I should be	
ner	struck dead. My mother lied to me.	89
Often times these	I'm not too young any more. Doesn't	
babies die	every good Catholic woman want a baby? The fault is my own. But you do not hear me. Plaster and paint. What	90
I thought it would	can she do with those? She will hate	
be good	me; she will hate me. It will get	91
And she will hate	worse! How can I raise my little	

(MOTHER 3 SLOWLY DEVELOPS WHISPERING INTO SHOUTING)

	ANGELINA:	MOTHER 2 (SINGS):	MOTHER 3 (WHISPERING): Everybody tells her, you have the evil eye.
2	(ANGELINA MOANS IN	No	No man, no man, no
	RESISTANCE TO THE TWO	legs	man will have her;
	VOICES WITHIN HERSELF,		often times it happens
	AND HER MOANING	(MOTHER 2	that these babies die.
3	BECOMES THE THIRD AND	ENTERS STAGE	Plaster and paint! It
	DOMINANT VOICE:)	IN SHADOWS)	happens that these babies die!
	No		
		No	
	No, no,		
			They twist!
4			
	No!		
-			They die!
	NO!		
	No!	No!	
=	(MISTO STODE WUFN	SOFTIV AS TE	FROM A GREAT DISTANCE.

(MUSIC STOPS WHEN SOFTLY, AS IF FROM A GREAT DISTANCE, THE BABY BEGINS TO CRY AND CHOKE.)

ANGELINA (SPOKEN):

(STARTLED:)

Ha-a

(SCARED:)

Oh!

(ANGELINA RUNS ON TIP-TOE TO CRIB AND LOOKS CLOSELY AT BABY -- [HOLD] -- THEN SIGHS WITH RELIEF. ANGELINA LIFTS BABY INTO HER ARMS.)

(AS:)

ANGELINA (SINGS):

96 Oh. . . Oh

(CRADLING BABY TO BREAST; SIGHINGLY):

Oh ----.

(A CAPPELLA: AS ANGELINA SINGS LULLABY, SHE ROCKS BACK AND FORTH. MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3 HUM ACCOMPANIMENT.)

ANGELINA (SINGS):

My poor baby you are crying, I am here, I hold you and you know that I love you. You know that I love you that you are mine and that I love you, that I love you.

(SUDDENLY ANGELINA'S MOOD BRIGHTENS):

Look up at your foolish mother, eh. Eh, she has been playing a game with a statue, for her own sins. Look at your mother, you smile. A baby should smile and smile and laugh.

(ANGELINA TICKLES BABY.) (MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3 EXIT.)

(END A CAPPELLA. -- TRANSITION)

been blessed.

has - - been - -

HERSELF.)

117

ANGELINA:

Holy Mother, forgive me. 110

> (SHE DIPS HER FINGERS INTO THE HOLY WATER, THEN CAREFULLY DOTS THE VIRGIN'S CHEEKS WITH HOLY WATER. PAUSE. SHE SAYS A SILENT PRAYER: THEN BURSTS INTO ACTION.)

111 Help! Help! Everybody!

(SHE RAISES THE SHADE, AND OPENS THE WINDOW. SHE LEANS OUT AND SHOUTS):

Help! Call a priest! There's a miracle! HELP!

(SHE RUSHES TO THE DOOR, AND THROWS IT OPEN.)

Everybody! Come, see! Look! Holy Jesus, a miracle! 112

> (UGLY OLD WOMEN CROWN INTO THE ROOM. JABBER ING IN ITALIAN. MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3 ARE PART OF THE CROWD. ANGELINA PUSHES THEM TO ONE SIDE. WHEN ENOUGH OF THEM ARE THERE, SHE ANNOUNCES:)

Look! The Holy Mother. I was praying for a sign. For baby. I was praying to the Holy Mother! I said, "Holy 113 114

Mother, if you love my baby, send me a sign." And see,

see what happened to the Virgin. 115

(THE OLD WOMEN PRESS FORWARD TO SEE.)

Her arms, her feet, her eye. See, the Holy Virgin sends me this sign: that she herself is crippled. Just like 116

my baby, she is crippled. And look, look, the eyes! She cries, She cries tears for my baby, and for us all! No, no, don't touch the Virgin! We should wait for the 118

priest! Pray! We should all pray! It's a miracle! 119

> (JULIA RUNS IN. THE OLD WOMEN ARE ON THEIR KNEES, FINGERING THEIR ROSARIES.)

ANGELINA:

There's been a miracle. See? Look!

(BEFORE JULIA CAN LOOK, THE OLD WOMEN DRAG HER DOWN. QUICKLY, THEY WHISPER TO 119A HER. JULIA BOWS HER HEAD. NOW ANGELINA IS COMPLETE MASTER OF THE SITUATION. GOES TO THE CRIB, AND PICKS UP HER BABY. SHE CARRIES HER TO THE NICHE OF THE VIRGIN. THE OLD WOMEN ARE MUMBLING PRAYERS. ANGELINA EXPLAINS TO THE BABY, AND ALSO FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE OLD WOMEN.)

ANGELINA:

This - - this is the Holy Mother. 120

MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

(HUMMING ACCOMPANIMENT)

ANGELINA:

See how she cries; the tears, see. She looked down from 121 Heaven and she saw you and she weeps for you and for me and for all of us.

ANGELINA AND MOTHER 2:

This is a sign that you are blessed, that the Virgin loves you, child. I will teach you to say, to say the rosary

ANGELINA AND MOTHER 2 (CONT.):

and we will go to church. The Virgin loves you, child. She looked down from heaven and she, and she saw	
you. She weeps for you, for me; she weeps for all of	122
us. This is a sign that you, a sign that you are blessed;	
that the Virgin love you, child. I will teach you to say,	123
to say the rosary, and we will go to church; every day	
I will teach you; I will teach you that this is a sign	124
that you, you are blessed sign that you, you are blessed.	125
She looked down from Heaven. She weeps for all of us.	
This is a sign that you are blessed, that the Virgin loves	126
you. I will teach you every day, every day, every day!	
I will carry you. And maybe someday you will become a	127
nun, and do good works, and smile and cry for all of us,	128
like the Virgin. There is no saint that blesses these	
children. Perhaps you will become the saint that blesses	129
them. Who knows.	

(ANGELINA TURNS AND FACES THE WOMEN. WHEN SHE SPEAKS, HER VOICE IS STRONG, AND CLEAR. SHE IS ISSUING A PROCLAMATION, NOT A PRAYER:)

ANGELINA:

The Virgin has made a miracle. She loves my baby. And I	130
repay the Virgin. I promise to raise my baby to love the	131
Virgin, and to love God. For the Virgin has blessed my	132
baby. And I will teach her to pray. The Virgin has made	133
a miracle. She loves my baby. And I repay the Virgin.	
I promise to raise my baby to love the Virgin, and to love	
God. For the Virgin has blessed my baby; she has made a	
miracle, and I will teach her to pray for all of us and to	
smile for us, and to pray saying:	135

ANGELINA, MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

Hail Mary, Full of Grace, the Lord Be, Be With You.	136
Holy Mother, hail Mary full of Grace. Blessed art thou among women. Holy Mother Hail Mary, full of Grace, full	137
of Grace, Mother of God. Blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus. Holy Mother Mail Mary full of Grace; pray for us	139
sinners now and at the hour of our death. Holy Mother of God full of Grace, you looked down from Heaven and said	140
let this baby live and that is the greatest blessing of all Mother Mary pray for us.	141-3 144
Hail Mary full of Grace,	146

ANGELINA:	MOTHER 2:	MOTHER 3:
-----------	-----------	-----------

	I will make you		147
The Lord be with you	listen. Lord be with you Holy Mother,	Everybody Help! Call a priest!	148

ANGELINA, MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

Our Virgin,	pray	for	us.	Hail	Mary	full	of	Grace.	
ANGELINA:			N	OTHER	2:			MOTHER	3:

ANGELINA:	MOTHER 2:	MOTHER 3:	
-	I will make you listen.		150
The Lord be with you	Lord be with you Holy Mother,	Everybody Help! Call a priest!	

ANGELINA, MOTHER 2 AND MOTHER 3:

Our Virgin,	pray	for	us.	Hai1	Mary	full	of	Grace.		151	L
-------------	------	-----	-----	------	------	------	----	--------	--	-----	---

	ANGELINA:	MOTHER 2:	MOTHER 3:
151 - B	The Lord be with you	I will make you listen. Lord be with you Holy Mother,	Everybody Help! Call a priest!
		ANGELINA, MOTHER 2	AND MOTHER 3:
151 - C	Our Virgin, pray for us. Mother pray for us. Our	Holy Mother, pray Virgin,	for us. Holy
	ANGELINA	MOTHER 2:	MOTHER 3:
154	She looked down. Lord be with you.	And she said.	Let this baby
155	Pray for us.	Hail Mary. There's been a. Full of Grace.	live. Everybody Help! Holy Mother, Hail. Holy Mother, Hail.

(THIS TRIO REPEATS WITH AN OVER-ALL CRESCENDO)

(UNTIL:)

— — CURTAIN — —

<u>Mother</u> <u>and</u> <u>Child</u>

Reviews, Bio's, Photos

Concert announcement NYTimes review DVD cover Whyte bio McClure bio TIME Magazine- Whyte NYTimes - Eclectix

Paul Wm. Bradley and Sally Baker In association with Cathedral Arts

present

The World Premiers of

Ron Whyte and Lee McClure's

MOTHER AND CHILD

a new American opera in one act

Music by Lee McClure Libretto by Ron Whyte

The Singers:
Judi Silverman
Linda LoPresti Holly Durniak
Cynthia Izzo

Stage Direction: Stephen McCabe Musical Direction: Bill Grossman

The Musicians:

Neil Swanson Christopher Vassiliades

Mike Finkel David Runnion

Props Designed by: Liz Goodall
Lighting: Tom Blancato
Associate Producer: Catherine Pope

Wednesday, May 23, 1990 -- 8:00 p.m.

THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE Amsterdam Avenue at 112th Street

New York City

ADMISSION FREE

The New York Times

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NEW YORK, TUESDAY, MAY 29, 1990

50 cents beyond 75 miles from New York

Review/Music

Posthumous Premiere of a One-Act Opera

By BERNARD HOLLAND

Ron Whyte, who died last September, wrote the libretto for "Mother and Child," a new one-act opera that had its first showing at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine on Wednesday night. Rarely is the author the first matter of consideration in an opera review, but Mr. Whyte's life and this stage piece are inseparable.

Born with physical disabilities that led finally to the amputation of both legs, he was an active and successful playwright whose subject matter often centered on his own particular set of problems. In "Mother and Child," a woman confronts the birth of a child without legs, with all the subsequent stages of fear, anger, guilt, reconciliation and affirmation.

Although the piece is essentially a monologue, it is sung and acted out by

four women. In this version of Lee McClure's music, two cellos and one piano-four hands, conducted by Bill Grossman, form the instrumental component. The singers operate from a square, unraised stage space surrounded by bleachers. Props are minimal — a few chairs, tables, a baby carriage and the like.

Mr. McClure's music is, for better and worse, eclectic. It veers from Broadway to sentimental pop ballad to angry instrumental harmonies to a recitative style that at times implies total dissonance. The high range of the singing parts often provided uncomfortable tests for these singers, but the impression of rough, unfinished vocal style is probably intended. The diversity of musical influences comes dangerously close to stylistic incoherence here. Could it be that the power of the subject simply overwhelms the music?

The nature of Wednesday's performance spoke to the opera's title in an unfortunate way, for this is truly an embryo of a production waiting to be born. Singers lugged their scores around the stage and periodically dropped all pretense of dramatic involvement to receive cues from Mr. Grossman. Diction, despite the most earnest efforts, left words to disappear into this huge space. Judi Silverman, Linda LoPresti, Holly Durniak and Cynthia Izzo took the vocal parts. Stephen McCabe was the stage directors.

tor.



Mother and Child

opera DVD

Ron Whyte

Playwright, Author, Librettist

RON WHYTE was born in Great Falls, Montana and studied at San Francisco State College, from which he earned a B.A., the Yale School of Drams (M.F.A.), and Union Theological Seminary (Master of Divinity). An award-winning playwright whose plays have been produced in six languages, eight countries, thirty states and provinces, and forty-seven cities, his Welcome To Andromeda was named one of Time Magazine's Ten Best Plays and has had over 100 productions. Writing in The New York Times, critic Clive Barns described this play as "taut and tough. It cleaves the air of hypocrisy." His Funeral March for a One—Man Band was winner of four Joseph Jefferson Awards (Chicago's Tonys). The Actors Studio production of his Andromeda II starred Ellen Burstyn; and his Disability: A Comedy was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in Drama and received the Drama-Logue Critics Award for Outstanding Achievement in Theatre for its 1989 production at the Odyssey Theatre in Los Angeles. Ron Whyte has been described by David Richards, now Senior Drama Critic of The Washington Post, as "the most original American dramatic voice since Edward Albee." A screenwriter as well with three feature films to his credit (Sidelong Glances Of A Pigeon Kicker, MGM-Cinerama; The Happiness Cage, Cinerama; and The Parents, CBS) Whyte was also the author of several books and articles including The Flower That Finally Grew (Crown), and "Exeunt Dying: Theatrical Mysteries" in editor Dilys Winn's best-selling Murder Ink (Workman). His plays have been published in The Best Short Plays, edited by Stanley Richards (Chilton), by Samuel French and Co., and by Theatre Communications Group.

Ron Whyte was the winner of numerous grants and awards, including a Rockefeller Foundation Playwriting Fellowship; a Shubert Foundation Fellowship; a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship; a John Golden Fellowship; a Joseph I. Levine/ABC screenwriting Fellowship; and grants and awards from the Carnegie Fund; the Llewellyn Miller Fund; the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters; ASCAP; the Dramatists Guild; and the Authors League. He also won commissions from National Public Radio/The Corporation for Public Broadcasting; CBS-TV News; the American Festival Theatre; the American Place Theatre; the New York Shakespeare Festival/The Public Theatre, and others.

He was the Coordinator of the late Lee Strasberg's Playwrights and Directors Unit at The Actors Studio, and was Playwright—in—Residence there. He also served as Chairman of the Young Playwrights Festival of the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts in Washington D.C. and as a panelist and/or consultant to the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare; The President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped; the New York State Council on the Arts Creative Artists Public Service program; and the panel which drafted Section #504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, the sweeping law which granted for the first time civil rights to disabled people.

Whyte was the Theater and Film Editor of <u>The American Book Review</u> as well as a Visiting Scholar at Yale University School of Drama. A specialist in the history of popular culture, Whyte was the Arts Editor and Book Review Editor of New York's <u>Soho Weekly News</u>.

Collaborating with composer Lee McClure, Whyte wrote the libretto for two operas, <u>VOICE</u> and <u>Mother And Child</u>. The latter was premiered to favorable press in 1990 at The Cathedral of St. John The Divine in New York City. They also collaborated on theatre songs, art songs, and choral works including <u>Chant For The Artist</u> premiered by The Gregg Smith Singers.

In September of 1989, at the age of 47, Ron Whyte died of a cerebral hemorrhage. Director of the Estate of Ron Whyte was Rev. Dr. Paul Wm. Bradley who worked closely with Lee McClure in presenting works by Whyte & McClure and gave written permission to Lee McClure to pursue future productions of Whyte & McClure collaborations. Rev. Bradley died in April of 2014.

contact: Lee McClure, 212-566-2217, 917-213-5874, mailto:eclectix@earthlink.net

L'ee McClure

COMPOSER - ELECTRIC FLAUTIST VIDEOGRAPHER

Founder Director Eclectix Chamber Orchestra Eclectix Dance Company

NEW YORK CITY



photo: McClure selfie



photo: Suzanne Kaufman



photo: Lenny Charles

Lee McClure

Developing the music of Gershwin, Ravel, Weill, Copland and contemporary Jazz, Lee McClure is one of the most melodic composers in the last 50 years of classical music. The lyric integrity of his music is distinguished by unexpected turns of traditional harmony imbued with undercurrents of searching.

In 2015 JoAnn Falletta, conductor for the Buffalo Philharmonic Orhestra wrote about Lee's <u>Symphony No.1 Montage</u>," I found it to be a really beautiful work! I look forward to studying it." In 2016 McClure published his <u>Jazz Preludes for Piano</u>. Without improvisation, the 17 miniatures in Book I & II are a captivating lexicon of Jazz styles that bring new life to the legacy of George Gershwin.

In 1985 in New York City Lee founded the Eclectix Chamber Orchestra that has presented the music of more than 130 living composers. Eclectix has stirred controversy by championing new music that is not minimal or atonal. The New York Times has written: "Ecelctix is a group dedicated to presenting melodic music in the tradition of Debussy, Gershwin, and Ellington. Most of this repertory grew out of a tonal, melody-accompaniment tradition, and a lot of it by way of American popular culture." Eclectix has premiered works by Earl Robinson, Toni & Gordon Parks, and Ron Carter and presented music of Meyer Kupferman, Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson and performances by the Gregg Smith Singers and ensembles led by Dick Hyman, Bill Charlap, and Jane Ira Bloom.

Lee's classical works include two operas, symphonic, modern-dance and choral compositions. The first of his two operas with librettos by the Pulitzer-Prize-nominated playwright Ron Whyte is Mother And Child that was premiered at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine (NYC). The Gregg Smith Singers premiered his Litany to the Holy Spirit for chorus and piano. One of Lee's substantial dance scores is Suite from The Voyage for two pianos. The Eclectix Chamber Orchestra's premiere of Hiatus was praised by The New York Times critic Tim Page who declared "it was probably the most distinguished piece on the program: the harmonies had bite and the musical ideas seemed both organic and Mr. McClure's own."

Lee's Jazz works include his arrangements of well-known Christmas songs created for his 2008 CD: <u>A Jazz Christmas Like You've Never Heard</u>. It was played on 40 radio stations in the United States and reviewed in **O's Place Jazz Magazine** by Oscar Groomes who wrote: "For sure Lee has managed to transform, twist and provoke our imaginations with this work. The album has a band exploding through classic spirited bebop arrangements with vocalist Margaret Dorn soaring on improvised vocals on top. The music is great and the lyrics are familiar."

In 2007 Lee founded the Eclectix Dance Company for which he creates all the music on his self-designed electric flute. He contributes major concepts and scenarios for the choreography and is the lighting and costume designer. Amplifying a silver flute through twelve processors and a sampler, Lee's electric flute creates grand-canyon echoes, a profound bass, three-octave glissandos, complex harmonies and other striking effects. He employs a sampler to create layers of ambient sounds, percussion and bass flute tracks which he fades in and out via foot pedals during live performances.

<u>Black Light</u> is the 2011 CD of Lee's trio featuring his electric flute with Barry Wedgle on guitar and Eddie Hall on percussion. 2017 marks the 23rd year accordionist William Schimmel has presented in concert duets composed and performed by Schimmel and McClure.

As videographer Lee has created unique jazz and classical music videos combining recordings of his compositions with skillfully crafted photomontages of landscape and star-scape images that are sensitive to the nuances and form of the music. They can be seen on Lee's Youtube channel: https://goo.gl/d2Gv81

Lee studied at the University of California Berkeley, the San Francisco Art Institute, and Berklee College of Music in Boston. His formal composition training began with a three-year scholarship of private tutorials studying Schoenberg's *Harmonielehre* at the Turtle Bay Music School in NYC. In 1979 he received his B.S in music composition from Brooklyn College (CUNY). A recipient of numerous ASCAP Special Awards, Lee's compositions have been performed by the Old First Orchestra of San Francisco and the Saturday Brass Quintet. He has received commissions from the Janet Gerson Dance Company, the King David Orchestra, and the Breve Trio.

Other major works of Lee McClure include: ♦his second opera Voice ♦Elohim And Adam for soprano and orchestra ♦Cerulean Narrows for orchestra ♦Invocation for vocal octet ♦Rock Adagio for electric flute. As an author Lee was invited to present his essay The Separation of Art and Society at the Society of Composers Inc's 1997 national conference in Miami. At Touro College Lee designed and taught a survey course on American music.

Born in 1947 McClure uses his matrilineal name and is the son of the late Rev. Dr. Arnold B. Come, Presbyterian theologian, Kierkegaard scholar, author, professor, and president of the San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo, California. At age 11 Lee began playing the flute in Basil, Switzerland, during his father's sabbatical.

Classical music - Opera & Vocal

"VOICE" — opera: baritone, soprano (with subtitles) (20 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZ6cSRehZ34

Mother And Child — opera: soprano, mezzo, alto

(with subtitles) (48 min)

https://youtu.be/gtiSiK_hZOA

Litany to the Holy Spirit - chorus and piano

(with subtitles) (14 min)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fx6NmVr_Gtc

Elohim And Adam – soprano, narrator, & orchestra (7 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=StSz-D0I2IQ&feature=youtu.be

Classical music - Orchestral & Instrumental

Symphony No.1 - Montage — symphonic orchestra, electric violin, and Jazz drums (8 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDH_6k6yxjY

 $\textbf{Suite from The Voyage} - \mathsf{two\ pianos\ (11\ min)}$

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OcWwvOLPo9Y&feature=youtu.be

Film Noir Memoir — solo piano (5 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90ZRpnqZ1So&feature=youtu.be

Hiatus — orchestra / <u>video of LIVE performance</u> (10 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMa29HPGbDQ

Cerulean Narrows — orchestra (10 min) https://youtu.be/aIutj20Bm6E

Electric Flute

Ondine's Oasis — electric flute & percussion (with subtitles) (5min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRUcWBUj35Y

Through A Glass Darkly — electric flute (5 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eejwDqkk-rA

The Leeward Islands — Eclectix Quintet: electric flute, voice, guitar, bass, percussion (20 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNgLtMJtBXo

Permanent Violet — Electric Flute and Guitar (4 min)

https://archive.org/details/PermanentViolet

Magenta Suspension — electric flute and guitar (5 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQZpHz6eWvk

Seven excerpts — electric flute

http://www.eclectixnyc.org/Eclectix.htm

CD Albums

Jazz Preludes for Piano, Book I & II

2016 CD

Audio: http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/leemcclure2

Score: http://www.ebay.com/usr/eclectixlee

A Jazz Christmas Like You've Never Heard

2008 CD

http://cdbabv.com/cd/leemclure2

Black Light

2011 CD – electric flute, guitar, percussion http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/leemccluretrio

Modern Dance - Video

Danse Nebulae — for electric flute & 5 dancers (9min)

https://youtu.be/woztKoakgT4

Six excerpts - Eclectix Dance Company

http://eclectixnyc.org/Video.htm (plays better in Safari)

Website

http://www.EclectixNYC.org

http://www.eclectixnyc.org/LinksToCompositions.html

Youtube Channel

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5PFRCX7OivIeBO1rMXJCHw/videos

mailto:eclectix@earthlink.net Lee McClure New York City

FEBRUARY 26, 1973

THE THEATER

Dolphin in the Dark

WELCOME FO ANDROMEDA and VARIETY OBIT by RON WHYTE

More evenings than not, that aisleanchored creature the drama critic peers out over a becalmed stage, stagnant characters and dialogue indistinguishable from soggy debris. But on occasion the sight of fresh and genuine talent greets his eye, and the stage seems to quiver with dramatic life.

Such a talent is Ron Whyte, 27, who is making his playwriting debut with these two off-Broadway playlets. Let's mark him for a dolphin who cavorts in drama as if it were his native element. He writes with humor, grace and eloquence, and he creates characters who refuse to leave the playgoer's memory.



PLAYWRIGHT RON WHYTE Spinning on a cinder.

The lesser item, Variety Obit, is a kind of songs-and-patter snapshot history of the U.S. from the Puritans to the present as recorded by a vaudeville clan. While the music by Mel Marvin is pleasant and the lyrics by Bob Satuloff are plaintively evocative, the retrospective vision does not cohere.



CLENNON & JARRETT IN "ANDROMEDA"

Welcome to Andromeda is another matter. The hero (David Clennon) is one of nature's ignominious errors. He is totally paralyzed except for his fingers and his head. His bed is a movable crypt. On his 21st birthday, his mother, a vampire bat whom we never see but whose oppressive presence empties the room of breathable air, has gone off to buy him some presents. She has left him in the care of a Southern nurse (Bella Jarrett). She, it develops, is an alcoholic who once gave a patient the wrong medicine. He, it develops, wants the wrong medicine—death—as surcease from sorrow. He is caustic; she is dumb. They are both anguished spirits, with a scarifying lack of control over the lethal game they are playing.

If one is to guess at Ron Whyte's intent, it is that he wants us to look at two people spinning on the charred cinders of this planet who may be saying to themselves: "Look, the abyss over which you lean is yourself. The pain you feel is just as unendurable as you think it is. The jokes you make as a fencer against fate merely underline your epitaph." If so, the playwright may count his luck as equal to his talent, for one can scarcely imagine more gifted and sensitive actors than David Clennon and Bella Jarrett for conveying his purpose and his vision.

TIME, FEBRUARY 26. 1973

Reviews of Lee McClure's music and the Eclectix new music concerts series which he founded.

The New York Times

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NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1986

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Music: Eclectix! Group

By TIM PAGE

McClure's "Hiatus" was probably the most distinguished piece on the program: the harmonies had bite and the musical ideas seemed both organic and Mr. McClure's own.

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NEW YORK, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1988

Eclectix Group

By BERNARD HOLLAND

Thus most of this repertory grew out of a tonal, melody-accompaniment tradition, and a lot of it by way of American popular culture.

989 The New York Times

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1989

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ARTS/REVIEWS

69

Devoted to Melody

Eclectix, a group dedicated to presenting melodic music in the tradition of Debussy, Gershwin and Ellington, performs in New York.

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NEW YORK, TUESDAY, MAY 29, 1990

50 cents beyond 75 miles from New York

Posthumous Premiere of a One-Act Opera

By BERNARD HOLLAND

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